

---

# COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE *of Funeral Service*



*Proudly Serving as a Non-Profit Institution for Higher Education*

---

## 2015-2016 Catalog

---

**415 Barren Springs Dr.  
Houston, Texas 77090  
1-800-628-1580  
281-873-0262  
Fax: 281-873-5232  
Website: [www.commonwealth.edu](http://www.commonwealth.edu)  
Email: [information@commonwealth.edu](mailto:information@commonwealth.edu)**

---

# **COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE**

*A Non-Profit Educational Institution  
Organized Under the Laws of the  
State of Texas*

## **CATALOG**

2015 - 2016

Catalog Volume 13, Published and Effective March 15, 2015

This catalog becomes effective on the date of publication. The Institute reserves the right to change the admission requirements, tuition, fees, academic regulations and other policies stated in the present catalog without formal notice. These changes shall take effect at any time as determined by the college authorities. Students are expected to have knowledge of the information presented in this publication, the Student Handbook and other Institute publications, as well as officially posted notices.

## **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY REGARDING STUDENTS**

This college operates in compliance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and accepts students without regard to race, color, national origin, or handicap not reasonably likely to affect performance.

Commonwealth Institute admits students of any race, color, creed, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of handicap. It does not discriminate on the basis of color, creed, sex, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

Commonwealth Institute complies with the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974."

The information contained in this catalog is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dr. J. Chandler Altieri  
President/CEO

## **IMPORTANT ADDRESSES**

American Board of Funeral  
Service Education  
3414 Ashland Ave., Ste. G  
St. Joseph, MO 64506  
816-233-3747  
Fax: 816-233-3793  
[www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org)

Texas Funeral Service Commission  
P.O. Box 12217  
Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711  
1-888-667-4881  
Fax: 512-479-5064  
[www.tfsc.state.tx.us](http://www.tfsc.state.tx.us)

Texas Workforce Commission  
101 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78778  
512-936-3160  
[www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org)

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Letter to Future Funeral Service Professionals	5
Purpose of Commonwealth Institute	6
Objectives of Commonwealth Institute	6
History of the Institute	7
Accreditation	8
Approvals	8
Memberships	8
Board of Regents	9
Advisory Board	9
Statement of Ownership	9
Administration	10
Faculty & Staff	10
Why Attend Commonwealth?	11
Hours of Operation	12
Location	12
Weather Closures	12
<b>Section 1 – Campus Facilities</b>	
Building, Furniture & Grounds	13
Computer Lab/ Internet Use	13
Smoke-Free Building	13
Campus Parking	13
Disabled Persons	13
Library	14
Clinical Embalming Facilities	14
County Funerals	14
<b>Section 2 – Student Life</b>	
Recreation & Culture	15
Student Body	15
Living Accommodations off Campus and Housing	15
Alumni Services	16
Placement Information	16
Student Organizations/Honor Society	16
McEnany & Moen Academic Achievement Award	16
<b>Section 3 – Admission &amp; Enrollment Policies</b>	
Minimum Standards for Admission	17
Texas Success Initiative	17
Application	18
Communication	18
How to Apply for Admission	18
Policy for Granting Credit	19
Transfer Credit	19
Withdrawal Procedure	19
Cancellation Policy	19
Suggested Enrollment Timeline	20

<b>Section 4 – State Licensing Requirements</b>	
General Rules	21
Students Seeking Licensure in Texas	22
Students Seeking Licensure in Louisiana	22
Students Seeking Licensure in Other States	22
<b>Section 5 – Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	
Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service	23
Funeral Directing (Certificate)	23
Online Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service	23
Online Certificate in Funeral Directing	23
Payment Plan	23
Late Payments	24
Types of Payment Accepted	24
Books	24
Examination Fees	24
<b>Section 6 – Financial Assistance/Financial Aid</b>	
Title IV Federal Assistance	25
Eligibility	25
How to Apply for Financial Aid	26
Federal Title IV Programs Available	27
General Information Regarding Loans	27
Return of Unearned Title IV Funds	27
Other Financial Assistance	28
Veteran Benefits	28
VA Rehabilitation	28
Texas Rehabilitation Commission (TRC)	28
Scholarships	28
<b>Section 7– Programs of Study</b>	
How coursework is classified	29
General Education Courses	30
Associate of Applied Science Degree	31
Course Sequence (AAS)	32
Certificate in Funeral Directing	33
Course Sequence (Certificate in F.D.)	34
Distance Learning	35
Online Associate of Applied Science	36
Externships and Labs	37
Testing Policy for Online Students	37
Proctoring Policy for Online AAS Students	37
Progress Requirements for OAAS	37
Course Sequence (Online AAS)	38
Online Certificate in Funeral Directing	39
Progress Requirements for Online Certificate in Funeral Directing	39
Course Sequence (Online Certificate in Funeral Directing)	40
<b>Section 8 – Course Descriptions by Area</b>	
Public Health & Technical	41
Management Sciences	42
Social Sciences	43

General Education Core	44
<b>Section 9 – Skill Enhancement Certificate and Continuing Education</b>	
Continuing Education	45
<b>Section 10 – Academic Calendar</b>	
2014	46
2015	47
2016	48
<b>Section 11 – General Policies</b>	
Attendance Policy	49
Appeal Procedure	49
Leave of Absence	49
Grievance Procedure	50
Dress Code	50
Telephone Calls	50
Pregnancy Policy	50
Proctored Examinations	51
Personal Hygiene	51
Student Responsibility and Conduct	51
Student Behavior	51
Stalking	52
Policy Against Harassment & Discrimination	52
Health	52
<b>Section 12 – Academic Policies</b>	
Grading	53
Make up Examinations	53
Incomplete Grades	53
Grade Reports	53
Satisfactory Academic Progress	54
Course Audit Policy	54
Academic Probation	54
Remedy of Academic Probation	54
Academic Dismissal	55
Academic Recognition	55
Commencement	55
Awards	55
<b>Section 13 – National Board Exam</b>	
License Examinations	57
National Board/Licensure	56
National Board Certification	57
Comprehensive Examination Structure	58
Requirements for Graduation with AAS Degree	58
<b>Section 14 – Financial Policies</b>	
Cancellation Policy	59
Refund Policy for both AAS and Certificate in F.D – In Session	59
Refund Policy for Online Certificate in F.D	60
Refund Policy for Student called to Active Military Service (TEC 132.0611)	61
Approved & Regulated by TWC Statement	62
The Museum of Funeral History	62

W

elcome to Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service – Commonwealth is a wonderful place and I hope, as a premiere training institute for future funeral service practitioners, that you learn a great deal of what we have to offer you.

Commonwealth Institute is located in Houston, Texas, America’s fourth largest city, with many events and activities that appeal to students with different interests and backgrounds.

As you learn more about Commonwealth Institute, you will see that this funeral service institution is indeed a step ahead of the rest. Commonwealth Institute begins with a state-of-the-art learning facility, which includes preparation facilities for practical technical training. Our unique affiliation with Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Medical School, and Harris County Department of Social Services allow students to participate in over 500 annual “real-life” funeral service experiences. Something else you will not find at another school is our relationship with the National Museum of Funeral History. Commonwealth Institute is the only funeral service college to offer this special resource.

Additionally, our faculty consists of some of the most innovative and brightest individuals in funeral service education. Commonwealth Institute believes in utilizing industry experienced instructors, so our students can be confident that they’re prepared to enter the workforce as capable and responsible practitioners. We do not simply teach theory, but believe strongly in applied learning – that is taking the knowledge you learn in the classroom and demonstrating how to use it in the workplace.

Commonwealth Institute is a multicultural institution committed towards enhancing and facilitating learning in an environment that contributes to student success and academic excellence.

On behalf of the Board of Regents, the administration, faculty and staff, I extend best wishes as you allow us to assist you in your quest for success and academic achievement.

Dr. J. Chandler Altieri  
President/CEO  
Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service

## **PURPOSE OF COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE**

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is a vocational, post secondary teaching institution with its primary purpose being to educate individuals interested in the subjects comprising the curriculum for licensure and a career in funeral service.

## **OBJECTIVES OF COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE**

Each program in funeral service education has as its central aim the recognition of the importance of funeral service education personnel as:

- Members of a human services profession;
- Members of the community in which they serve;
- Participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession;
- Professional knowledge of and compliance with federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local regulatory guidelines (in the

geographic area where they practice);  
and

- Professional sensitivity to the responsibility for public health, safety and welfare in caring for human remains.

Each program has the following objectives:

- To enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession.
- To educate students in every phase of funeral service and to help enable them to develop the proficiency and skills necessary for the profession, as defined in the Preamble above.
- To educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large.
- To emphasize high standards of ethical conduct.
- To provide a curriculum at the post secondary level of instruction.
- To encourage student and faculty research in the field of funeral service.
- To be cognizant of non-traditional students, and help enable achievement of their educational goals through greater avenues of access.

## **HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTE**

During the mid-part of the century, it became evident that there was a great need in Southeast Texas to open a college of mortuary science to train men and women in the art and science of embalming and the skill of funeral directing.

In 1936 Mr. R. Victor Landig accepted this challenge and opened the Landig College of Mortuary Science in Houston, Texas. The Landig College of Mortuary Science immediately became recognized as one of the leading and most respected colleges of mortuary science in the United States.

Mr. Landig was truly a pioneer in funeral service education. Possessing vision and good academic skills, Mr. Landig was able to attract to his faculty some of the leading experts in embalming and restorative art in the country. Some of the luminaries in funeral service education that were on the Landig faculty included A.O. Spriggs, the author of "The Art and Science of Embalming" and "Champion's Textbook on Restorative Art". Mr. Spriggs went on to become the Director of Research for the Champion Embalming Fluid Company. Also on the faculty was Mr. C.F. Callaway, who wrote the widely used textbook "The Art of Funeral Directing". Mr. Callaway was a widely respected author and lecturer, and later served as Director of Research for the Undertakers' Supply Company in Chicago. Mr. Landig authored a book entitled "Time Changes Everything," which was a standard textbook concerning communication skills of the funeral director. Also during this growth period, the Landig College of Mortuary Science became the focal point in the formation of Howard S. Eckel's new method of restorative art called "Derma Surgery." This mortuary art was widely taught and is still used today as the core of the Restorative Art course.

In 1955 Mr. Landig had plans to move his college to Commonwealth Street located in downtown Houston. However personal health problems

stopped Mr. Landig's plan of a new school on Commonwealth Street, although the new name was retained, the Commonwealth College of Science. Due to poor health, Mr. Landig sold his interests in the college to Mr. Tex Garton, who was an extremely popular and respected funeral director in the Houston area. Mr. Garton operated the college until 1966, when the college was purchased by the Pierce organization. To this end, a new college was built on Barren Springs Dr. in northeast Houston.

Over the years the college has expanded and now offers the finest in educational facilities and faculty in the United States. Today, Commonwealth has a state of the art embalming facility, a restorative art laboratory, a new casket display room, and a recently updated and improved learning resource center.

In the late 1980's an extensive feasibility study by a team of the nation's top funeral service executives, practitioners, and funeral service educators was conducted by Mr. R.L. Waltrip, with the goal in mind of providing the finest in contemporary funeral service education. Key features included: a curriculum which emphasized hands-on experience in embalming and restorative art, computer science, and funeral directing and management skills. Provisions were made, and in 1988 the "Institute of Funeral Service" was chartered as a Texas non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation. The opening of the Institute of Funeral Service was announced in the summer months in professional journals. The first class enrolled and instruction began on August 29, 1988.

For a two year period there were two mortuary colleges in Houston. In 1990, the Institute of Funeral Service acquired the Commonwealth College of Funeral Service and changed its name, becoming the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service. The merger of the two colleges brought together the finest faculty and facilities.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Commonwealth Institute is recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as an Institution of Higher Learning and is authorized to offer instruction leading to the Associate of Applied Science Degree.

Commonwealth Institute is recognized by the Texas Workforce Commission to offer instruction leading to a Certificate in Funeral Directing.

The Funeral Service program and Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service are accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 3414 Ashland Avenue, Suite G, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506 (816) 233-3747. Web: [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org).

## **APPROVALS**

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is approved for the education and training of veterans, disabled persons and rehabilitation trainers by the Texas Workforce Commission.

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is approved and regulated by the Texas Workforce Commission Career Schools and Colleges.

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is licensed by the Texas Funeral Service Commission as a funeral establishment.

## **MEMBERSHIPS**

Commonwealth Institute's commitment to the community and the profession is illustrated by the following institutional or staff memberships:

- Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practitioners
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation
- Houston Metropolitan Funeral Directors Association
- Houston Funeral Directors and Morticians Association
- International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association
- Library & Information Resources Network
- National Association of Colleges of Mortuary Science
- National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association
- National Funeral Directors Association
- Texas Funeral Directors Association
- Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
- Veterans Administration

## **BOARD OF REGENTS**

### **R.L. WALTRIP, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

*Chairman of the Board, Service Corporation International*

### **ROBERT M. BOETTICHER, SR., VICE-CHAIRMAN**

*Director of Special Projects, Service Corporation International*

### **DR. J. CHANDLER ALTIERI, PRESIDENT**

*Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service*

### **W. BLAIR WALTRIP, VICE PRESIDENT AND TREASURER**

### **JAMES M. SHELGER, SECRETARY**

*Senior Legal Counsel, Service Corporation International*

### **THOMAS L. RYAN, MEMBER**

*President and Chief Executive Officer, Service Corporation International*

### **MICHAEL R. WEBB, MEMBER**

*Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Service Corporation International*

### **SUMNER JAMES WARING, III, MEMBER**

*Senior Vice President, Service Corporation International*

### **STEVE A. TIDWELL, MEMBER**

*Senior Vice President, Service Corporation International*

### **GENEVIEVE G. KEENEY, MEMBER**

*President, National Museum of Funeral History*

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

Robert G. Duncan  
*Funeral Director*

John Kleisel  
*Funeral Director*

Elizabeth George  
*Funeral Director*

Andy Anderson  
*Funeral Director*

Louis Crespo  
*Funeral Director*

Arnell Johnson  
*Funeral Director*

Jim Flippen  
*Funeral Director*

Shu Tang  
*Funeral Director*

John Snider  
*Funeral Director*

Christina Morales-Krasnick  
*Funeral Director*

## **STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP**

The name of the incorporated business as stated in its amended articles of incorporation is Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service. Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is a Texas non-profit 501(c) 3 tax exempt organization which is governed and overseen by the board of regents and the president, as chief executive officer.

## ADMINISTRATION

### **DR. JASON C. ALTIERI, President/Chief Executive Officer**

Ed. D. Texas Tech University  
M.S. Southern Nazarene University  
B.S. University of Central Oklahoma  
Professional Licensure: Texas and Oklahoma

### **STUART MOEN, Dean of Academics, CFSP**

Instructor: Anatomy, Embalming, Forensic Pathology, Microbiology, Thanatochemistry  
M.A. in Adult and Higher Education, University of South Dakota  
B.S. in Mortuary Science, University of Minnesota  
Advisor: National Funeral Service Honor Society  
Professional Licensure: Texas  
Contributing Author: Mayer's Embalming: History, Theory and Practice Textbook

### **CHRISTOPHER C. LAYTON, Dean of Students**

Instructor: Business Law, Counseling, Dynamics of Grief, Funeral Directing, Funeral Merchandising, History of Funeral Service, Mortuary Administration, Operating a Business  
M.Ed. University of Houston  
B.A. Arizona State University  
Certificate in Mortuary Science, Cypress College  
Certified: Hospice Trainer; Disaster Management  
Professional Licensure: Arizona, California, Texas

## FACULTY & STAFF

### **PATRICIA MORENO, Registrar**

Diploma: Commonwealth Institute  
Professional Licensure: Texas

### **JESSIKA JENKINS, Student Services Coordinator**

M.Ed. Texas Tech University  
B.S. Texas A&M University  
A.A.S. Commonwealth Institute  
Professional Licensure: Texas

### **RENÉ ALTHEIMER, Admissions Specialist**

### **MELISSA DAVIS, Librarian**

M.L.S. Sam Houston State University  
B.A. Henderson State University

### **JAMES BALL, JR.**

M.A. Texas Southern University  
B.A. Texas Southern University

### **JENNAFER SCHNAUTZ**

M.S. Texas A&M University  
B.S. Rice University

### **DR. JOSE CORTES**

D.V.M. National University of Colombia  
M.Sc. Louisiana State University

### **GUSTAVE MILBURN, JR.**

M.A. University of Texas at San Antonio  
B.S. Texas A&M University

### **REBECCA GARDNER**

B.S. University of Phoenix  
A.A.S. San Antonio College  
Professional Licensure: Texas

### **JANE HEMBERGER**

M.Ed. Boston College  
B.F.A. University of California Berkley  
A.A.S. Commonwealth Institute  
Professional Licensure: Texas

### **SHANNON ALTIERI**

B.S. University of Central Oklahoma  
Professional Licensure: Oklahoma

### **ILIA RIVERA-RODRIGUEZ**

M.A. University of Houston  
B.S. University of Houston-Clear Lake

### **REMO PORTELLI**

M.S.W. Fordham University  
B. A. Upsala College  
Certificate of Proficiency, Funeral Directing- St. Louis Community College

### **EUGENIA P. ROBBINS**

M.A. University of Alaska Fairbanks  
B. S. University of Texas Austin  
Certificate of Proficiency, Funeral Directing- St. Louis Community College  
Professional Licensure: Texas

### **QUIANNA GLAPION**

M.A. Texas Southern University  
B.A. Loyola University

### **DAVID TAYLOR, JR., Clinical Lab Coordinator**

A.A.S. Commonwealth Institute  
Professional Licensure: Texas

## **WHY ATTEND COMMONWEALTH?**

Over the years the college has established an enviable reputation for providing practical experience to its students. In fact, Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is recognized by the Texas Funeral Service Commission as a licensed funeral establishment.

The embalming laboratory affords our students extensive embalming and restorative art experience under the direct supervision of licensed faculty members. The laboratory is located in the Commonwealth building. We also offer extensive practical experience in arrangements, counseling, merchandising, and funeral assisting for the indigent through our affiliation with Harris County Social Services. Students have the benefit of exposure to real-life work situations. We enhance these offerings by scheduling many special programs, field trips, and presentations throughout the school year. Commonwealth is also proud to offer both the Associate of Applied Science Degree and Certificate in Funeral Directing via distance education.



## HOURS OF OPERATION

Commonwealth Institute is open and available to students Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except during designated holidays (see Calendar, [www.commonwealth.edu](http://www.commonwealth.edu)). Lecture classes are scheduled Monday through Thursday during the following times:

First Hour.....8:00 - 8:50 a.m.  
Second Hour...9:00 - 9:50 a.m.  
Third Hour...10:00 - 10:50 a.m.  
Fourth Hour..11:00 - 11:50 a.m.  
Fifth Hour....12:00 - 12:50 p.m.

\*Laboratory sessions for classes may be scheduled from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday. Other times for laboratory sessions will be determined on an as need basis. Every effort is made to complete lab by 4:30 p.m.; however this may vary depending on the individual case.

## WEATHER CLOSURES

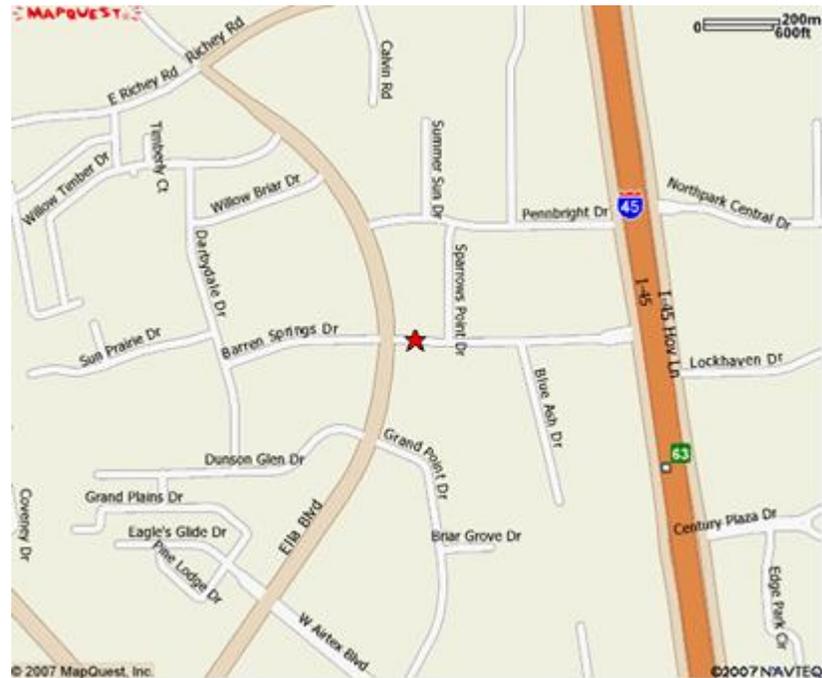
CIFS generally follows Houston Independent School District (HISD) when it comes to system-wide weather related closures and delays. This does not include individual school closures or non-weather related closures. Local television stations and their accompanying websites list HISD inclement weather closures. In all cases, students should use good judgment regarding their individual situations as they relate to poor weather and travel conditions. Students should never jeopardize their life, health, or safety.

## LOCATION

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is located at 415 Barren Springs Drive on the north side of Houston, Texas near Interstate 45 North and George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

From I-45 southbound, exit at Richey Road; continue south on the service road to Barren Springs Drive (main entrance to Commerce Park North) turn right onto Barren Springs. The college is approximately 3 blocks on the left from the I-45 service road.

From I-45 going north, exit at Airtex Road, go left on Airtex to Ella Blvd., turn right on Ella Blvd., proceed to Barren Springs Dr., and turn right. You will see the college on the right side.



# Section 1 Campus Facilities

## **BUILDING, FURNITURE, AND GROUNDS**

Students are urged to cooperate to the maximum possible extent in keeping the building and grounds clean. Please do not sit or lie in the hallways. This causes an obstruction to fellow students or visitors to the Institute and could be dangerous in the event of an emergency.

The Institute shares the educational complex at 415 Barren Springs Drive with two other entities, the National Museum of Funeral History and the American Funeral Service Training Center.

## **COMPUTER LAB**

Computers for student use in Commonwealth Institute's computer lab are for educational purposes only (please see student handbook). Commonwealth Institute monitors computer (including internet) use to determine if violations of any computer usage guidelines posted in the computer lab exist. Students may jeopardize their academic standing if violations are committed.

## **DISABLED PERSONS**

Commonwealth is a ground level facility with access for disabled persons. Commonwealth operates in compliance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and accepts students without regard to race, color, national origin, or handicap not likely to affect performance.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require the institution to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. However, reasonable accommodations do not include fundamental alterations to course requirements. Furthermore, accommodations cannot be made that would effectively place an undue administrative or financial burden on the College.

## **SMOKE-FREE BUILDING**

The school complex is a smoke-free building. Therefore, smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the building. Smoking is permitted only in designated areas. Students are asked to dispose of cigarettes in the receptacles provided for them and not on the school grounds.

## **CAMPUS PARKING**

Ample student parking is provided on the side and in back of the school complex. The parking lot in front of the building is reserved for museum guests. Automobiles are to be parked only in designated parking spaces. Unauthorized cars parked in handicapped spaces or RESERVED areas, will be towed at the owner's expense.

## **LIBRARY**

The George Poston Memorial Library and Learning Resource Center has approximately 4,500 texts, ebooks, videos, magazines, and subscribes to over 25 periodicals and newspapers in the funeral profession. The Library is arranged in open stacks, enabling students to browse and make their own book selections.

The facilities include reading and study areas, a group study area, photocopier, computer access stations and video viewing equipment. Bibliographic information about the library's material collection is available via an online public access catalog at [cifslibrary.follettdestiny.com](http://cifslibrary.follettdestiny.com). The resource center provides Internet access, full-text periodical, newspaper databases, and other electronic reference sources. The reference collection of print volumes includes bibliographies, atlases, periodical indexes and other reference sources. Special archive collections include early mortuary periodicals, early trade catalogs, and other data.

Instruction in library research methodology and current research technology is provided for individuals and classes under the direction of a professional librarian. Contact Mrs. Davis for assistance by calling 1-800-628-1580 Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. or by emailing [library@commonwealth.edu](mailto:library@commonwealth.edu) at any time.

The Library's holdings are supplemented by membership in the Library and Information Resources Network (LIRN), a library consortium of over 60 private colleges and universities serving a diverse and international student population. LIRN provides on and off campus access to many full text, bibliographic and electronic journals and databases covering a wide array of subjects.

## **COUNTY FUNERALS**

Unique to the educational opportunities at the Institute are, the student's participation in the funeral services of the deceased persons who will be interred in the Harris County Cemetery. Students not only embalm, cosmetize, dress, and casket the remains, they also have the voluntary opportunity to assist with actual funeral services under licensed supervision. Friday is the County funeral day on which Commonwealth students can participate in four to twelve services a week.

## **CLINICAL EMBALMING FACILITIES**

The Institute's clinical facilities are located on the premises. The three-suite embalming facility, recently remodeled, is able to accommodate approximately 500 human remains annually.

The Institute's clinical program provides that vital link between theory and practice and helps to integrate and apply knowledge gained in restorative art, cosmetology, pathology, anatomy, microbiology and chemistry, as well as the theory of embalming itself.

Participation in a minimum of ten embalming cases are required of each student enrolled in the Associate Degree program.

An abundance of opportunities exists for those who wish to exceed the minimum requirement. The Institute offers students a unique experience in practical embalming and restoration. Primary to this educational experience is the relationships that Commonwealth has with the prestigious Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Medical Branch, and Harris County Social Services.

The provision of extensive practical experience remains at the top of the Institute's priorities. Therefore, students embalm, dress, cosmetize, and casket the decedents who will be interred in the county cemetery. Commonwealth students are able to assist on these funeral services.



## Section 3 Student Life

### **RECREATION AND CULTURE**

Houston, the nation's fourth largest city, is known as the Bayou City and is well deserving of that name. In addition to affordable housing and exceptional public transportation, there is tremendous excitement in living in a culturally rich environment.

There is an endless list of all that Houston has to offer, including: major sporting events, concerts, beaches, NASA Space Center, cultural festivals, museums, abundant parks, and of course the food!

### **STUDENT BODY**

One of the Institute's distinct assets is the diversity of its student population. Students come from all over the United States and some foreign countries. This results in constant faculty and student exposure to various perspectives and practices throughout the world. The opportunity also exists to make valued friends and future professional contacts nationwide.

### **LIVING ACCOMODATIONS OFF CAMPUS AND HOUSING**

It is the responsibility of the student in locating satisfactory living accommodations. Students may choose from single rooms or apartments, many within walking distance of the campus. Furnished apartments are available, and monthly rents for such facilities will vary depending upon the type and location of the apartments.

Commonwealth Institute does not provide on or off campus housing. Several apartment and townhouse complexes are located within the same office park as the campus of Commonwealth Institute. In addition, the Houston area newspapers carry a comprehensive listing of available housing. Students must make their own arrangements for housing, and Commonwealth assumes no responsibility for any problems between landlord and student.

## **ALUMNI SERVICES**

The Alumni Association was founded in May of 1997. This association was put together so that graduates could visit and keep in touch with everyone, meet other graduates and reminisce about their school days. Some of the events which the alumni association has sponsored: a luncheon for graduating seniors during their National Board review, scholarships, discounts on continuing education classes, cruises with CEU programs, and all-class reunions at the State Conventions. New graduates receive a one year membership at no cost. For additional information on Alumni Services, see Alumni section in the Student Handbook.

## **PLACEMENT/JOB INFORMATION**

Commonwealth Institute maintains a list of prospective employers concerning job positions for students and graduates, for both full and part-time employment. Additionally, prospective employers are invited to attend the Open house held at Commonwealth Institute in March and September where they can conduct interviews at that time. Many requests for employment are filled each year. If you would like assistance in obtaining employment, please send a one page resume to Commonwealth Institute. Your resume will be maintained for thirty days and sent to prospective employers. Commonwealth Institute does not guarantee employment to any student or graduate, as this is a decision which must always be made between employer and prospective employee.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS/HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Funeral Service Honor Society is represented on campus. The purpose of the honor society is to offer service and leadership to Commonwealth Institute, as well as promote academics and fellowship among all students enrolled at Commonwealth.

The Honor Society members sponsor study groups, assist as hosts at graduation and other college functions, and assist Commonwealth Institute's recruiting efforts. Membership is by invitation, and is open to both men and women who are enrolled fulltime, with a GPA of 3.5 or higher for any grading period. Dues and other criteria are set by the honor society.

A faculty member is assigned as an advisor to the honor society. Activities vary from year to year. Events are planned with the student body's interest and schedules in mind. All activities planned by the honor society are to be coordinated through the faculty sponsor with approval from the administration.

## **MCENANY & MOEN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

This award is presented to the member of the honor society who has shown the greatest improvements in grade point average during the academic year. The award is named in honor of the charter President and Dean of Commonwealth Institute.

# Section 3 Admission & Enrollment Policies

## MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION

The minimum standards for admission to the programs at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service are:

- Be a graduate of an accredited four-year high school (or hold a GED certificate recognized by the state education department)
- Meet the licensure requirements of the state in which the individual plans to seek initial licensure.
- Students enrolling in the AAS program and the Certificate of Funeral Directing without previous college must successfully fulfill one of the following requirements:
  - 1.) Have an ACT minimum score of 21 on the composite.
  - 2.) Have an SAT combined score of 990 (If taken after April 1, 1995).
  - 3.) Have graduated in the upper one fourth of their high school class.
  - 4.) Have scored a minimum of 21 on the SLE\*.

*\*Wonderlic Personnel Test, Inc. produces the SLE. The SLE is the chosen entrance exam used by Commonwealth Institute. The SLE is a twelve-minute examination consisting of 50 questions. The student's score on the SLE reflects the number of questions answered correctly during the testing time. Students are permitted three attempts to successfully complete the SLE. However, a student may only attempt two different versions on the same day. In those instances where a third attempt is necessary, a minimum waiting period of five calendar days is required before the third attempt can be administered. There is no charge for the SLE taken at Commonwealth.*

## TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules require all AAS students, unless otherwise exempt, to be assessed of their college readiness prior to enrolling in college level coursework using a Coordinating Board approved assessment instrument. Institutions and students work together to develop an individualized plan for the student, which may include developmental education, retesting, or other means of insuring that the student has the skills necessary to pursue college level course work. Approved assessment instruments include the THEA (formerly the TASP test), COMPASS, ASSET, or ACCUPLACER exams. Incoming students must test prior to enrollment or by the end of the first quarter, if extenuating circumstances exist. There are exceptions and exemptions for which a student may be eligible, as determined by the Dean of Academics or the Registrar. Some examples of approved exemptions are:

- a) Completion of an AAS degree or higher prior to enrollment;
- b) successful completion of at least 12 semester hours from either an in-state or out-of-state regionally accredited postsecondary institution; successful completion of at least one, three semester hour course from any regionally accredited postsecondary institution prior to the Fall of 1989.

## APPLICATIONS

Applications are processed in the order in which they are received. However, in all cases, new enrollees are given priority over re-enrolling students and students transferring from other ABFSE accredited programs.

## COMMUNICATION

All students must provide a valid email address. Official Institute communication occurs through the e-mail provided on the application for admission. A student who desires to utilize an email address different than the one provided on the application must immediately notify CIFS staff in writing. Students are responsible for checking their email on a daily basis. Information e-mailed to students' official e-mail accounts is considered to be sufficient public notification to all students. In addition to utilizing the resources available on campus, CIFS encourages our students to communicate openly and honestly with their families on all matters, especially those areas relevant to academic progress, personal concerns, and disciplinary action.

It is the students' responsibility to keep their current address, phone number, and e-mail address registered with the administrative office.

## HOW TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION

Enrollment closes 30 days prior to the start date. You must be accepted by the close of enrollment to be considered for that term.

### **Steps to apply for admission:**

1. Complete an Application for Admission and forward it to Commonwealth Institute with the \$50.00 application fee.
2. If your name has been changed from that appearing on your birth certificate, submit a copy of the document showing every name change, (marriage license, divorce decree, etc).
3. Contact your high school and request an official copy of your final transcript to be sent directly to Commonwealth. If you have a GED certificate, contact your state education agency and request the certificate and certificate transcript be sent directly to Commonwealth.
4. Contact *each* vocational or technical school, college or university from which you plan to transfer credit and request a final official transcript be sent directly to Commonwealth Institute.
5. If you plan to receive benefits from the Veteran's Administration, submit a certified copy of your DD-214 and military transcripts (60 days prior to enrollment).
6. Submit evidence of one of the following:
  - Graduated in the upper one-fourth of their high school class
  - Scored at the required level on either the SAT or ACT
  - Successful completion of the SLE (entrance exam provided at Commonwealth Institute)
  - Upon appeal, written waiver by the President or Dean may consider such factors as student's background, achievements, honors, and work history in making its decision.

After Commonwealth Institute has received the completed application, fee, and all other required supporting documents; the admission committee will review the application and will notify the applicant of its decision.

## **POLICY FOR GRANTING CREDIT**

Commonwealth Institute will accept transfer credit earned at another institution in accordance with commonly accepted good practice in higher education, provide the following criteria are met:

- Coursework from a regionally accredited institution, or from a nationally recognized agency such as C.L.E.P., evidenced by an official transcript, will be accepted only for the General Education core or related subjects.
- Coursework from other ABFSE accredited mortuary colleges may be accepted, provided the coursework parallels the content of courses offered by Commonwealth Institute.
- A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (“C” average) must be achieved in all transfer courses. No grades below a “D” will be accepted as transfer credit.

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

CIFS will recognize and accept hours only from state accredited universities, colleges and community college under guidelines of SACS accreditation or the equivalent thereto. CIFS will not accept transfer credit for specialized courses taken more than 3 years from the date of application. Students who completed embalming cases at an ABFSE accredited program may request to receive credit for cases only when the institution/program previously attended formally certifies to the fact that cases have been completed as evidenced by fulfilling ABFSE standards 6.4.2 and 6.4.5. It is the students’ responsibility to initiate this discussion with the previous institution/program prior to attending CIFS. A similar requirement exists to receive restorative art lab credit as mandated by ABFSE standard 6.4.10 of the ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual.

Students desiring to seek transfer credit are advised to consult the Dean of Academics prior to enrollment for evaluation of transfer credit. If transfer credit is granted the grade of “T” will appear on the student’s official transcript. Only the grades earned at

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

A full refund will be made to any student who cancels the enrollment contract within 72 hours (until midnight of the third day excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) after the enrollment contract is signed.

Commonwealth Institute will be used in computing the student’s GPA.

If there is any question or if there is any doubt as to transferability of credits, Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service reserves the right to require the student to show proficiency by successfully completing a proficiency examination in the subject(s)/course(s) for which transfer credit is being requested.

Students contemplating admission with transfer credit should note that most states require students to attend mortuary college for a period of not less than twelve months.

To be eligible for graduation from CIFS you must complete a minimum of 30 quarter hours at CIFS.

## **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

Students who wish to withdraw from a class or Commonwealth Institute prior to the end of the quarter are required to sign a Withdrawal form, available from the Registrar, or by submitting a letter of withdrawal to Commonwealth Institute. The letter should include (1) intended withdrawal date (2) specific reason(s) for withdrawal (3) if he/she plans to return at a later date and (4) his/her permanent mailing address. Absence from scheduled classes will not be regarded as formal withdrawal. Failure to comply with this regulation can result in the recording of failing grades in all courses in which the student is enrolled. Students following proper withdrawal procedure prior to the beginning of quarter final examinations will have a “W” recorded on the official transcript. Refer to FINANCIAL INFORMATION section for additional information concerning withdrawal.

Commonwealth Institute does not warrant the acceptance of its credits at other academic institutions. Acceptance of transfer credit is strictly a function of the receiving institution.

## **SUGGESTED ENROLLMENT TIMETABLE**

Applicants are encouraged to complete all preparations for the matriculation early. Satisfactory housing accommodations, part-time work arrangements, timely receipt of financial aid and actual enrollment for classes are all facilitated if they are not hurried in the weeks just prior to entrance dates. The following timetable may be helpful, but not required.

**Six Months Prior to Enrollment:** Send in all application materials and fees.

**Five Months Prior to Enrollment:** Notify your State Licensing Board of your acceptance and register, if required. You may also want to request information on funeral homes that are hiring in your area.

**Four Months Prior to Enrollment:** Send the Institute any loan forms, V.A. forms etc. for certification of acceptance. If you are planning to receive Financial Aid you need to complete the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). *Only students enrolling into the Associate of Applied Science program are eligible to receive Title IV funding.*

**Three Months Prior to Enrollment:** Confirm with the admissions department that all of the requirements have been met or submit any missing documents.

**Two Months Prior to Enrollment:** Complete any of the above that has not been accomplished.

**One Month Prior to Enrollment:** The institute will forward orientation and registration information to you. The student may wish to attend the Institute's Open House as scheduled. Confirm any arrangements not yet finalized or request any additional information you might still need

# Section 4 State Licensing Requirements

## GENERAL RULES

As a general rule, most states require that candidates for funeral director and/or embalming licensure fulfill licensing requirements as follows: graduation from high school; completion of one or two years general collegiate coursework; completion of mortuary college; pass national or state board examination; serve internship/apprenticeship; pass oral interview. Applicants are advised to contact the licensing authority in the state in which they wish to practice in order to obtain the specific requirements of that state.

The length of the apprenticeship, the amount of college required, specific courses within the general coursework, and the order in which all requirements have to be met *vary* greatly from state to state. The Institute's admissions staff will be pleased to help you, but the responsibility for insuring proper *pre-mortuary college* preparation rests with the applicant.

Applicants must meet any mandated pre-mortuary college state licensing requirements prior to admission. For detailed information, please refer to the Institute's website [www.commonwealth.edu](http://www.commonwealth.edu) and go to the State Licensing section.

There are no uniform licensing laws governing funeral service in the United States, each state sets its own requirements. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that licensure requirements have been met. Questions concerning individual state requirements should be directed to the licensing authority in the state(s) in which you intend to practice. Addresses of the licensing authorities may be obtained from the Institute's website.

The licensing agencies of some states require a prospective student to notify the agency prior to enrollment in mortuary college, as well as completion of pre-mortuary college educational requirements.

Some states bar applicants with misdemeanor or felony convictions from obtaining a license. In most instances these matters are handled on a case-by-case basis. Prospective enrollees who might be affected by this should clear this matter prior to seeking enrollment by communication directly with the state funeral service licensing agency.

## **STUDENTS SEEKING LICENSURE IN TEXAS**

Texas Funeral Service Commission  
P.O. Box 12217  
Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711-1440  
FedEx Address: 333 Guadalupe St.  
Austin, TX 78711-1440  
Phone: (512) 936-2474. Email: [info@tfsc.state.tx.us](mailto:info@tfsc.state.tx.us) Website: [www.tfsc.state.tx.us](http://www.tfsc.state.tx.us).

Texas requires applicants for licensure to be 18 years of age, hold a high school diploma or GED certificate, graduate from an accredited mortuary college, minimum scaled score of 75% on each section of the National Board Examination, minimum 75% on the Texas Funeral Law Examination, and a period of provisional licensure following (or concurrently) mortuary school for a minimum of 12 consecutive months in which the provisional licensee must perform 60 cases under the direct supervision of an approved funeral director and /or embalmer.

## **STUDENTS SEEKING LICENSURE IN LOUISIANA**

Louisiana State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors  
3500 N. Causeway Boulevard, Suite #1232  
Metairie, LA 70002

## **STUDENT SEEKING LICENSURE IN STATES OTHER THAN TEXAS AND LOUISIANA**

For students seeking licensure information on their state they can visit The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards at [www.theconferenceonline.org](http://www.theconferenceonline.org).

# Section 5 Tuition & Fees

Tuition will be determined according to the program of enrollment and if the general study core courses are taken at Commonwealth or transferred into Commonwealth. Tuition payments are due the first day of the quarter for in session students. Tuition for online students is due two weeks prior to the start of the quarter to ensure timely delivery of books. Tuition and Fees are subject to change without prior notification.

## **ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE IN FUNERAL SERVICE**

If the general study courses are taken **in session** at Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$15,620 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$15,520 tuition.

If general study courses are transferred to Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$11,780 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$11,680 tuition. Cost of tuition is calculated at \$160 per quarter credit hour.

## **FUNERAL DIRECTING (CERTIFICATE)**

If the general study courses are taken **in session** at Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$9,540 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$9,440 tuition.

If the general study courses are transferred to Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$6,340 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation and \$6,240 tuition. Cost of tuition is calculated at \$160 per quarter credit hour.

## **PAYMENT PLAN**

Commonwealth offers quarterly and monthly payment plans to assist students in financing their education. Any student who has formally withdrawn with a balance owed to the Institute automatically forfeits the option for the payment plan upon any future reenrollment. The applicant cannot be in default on any previously awarded loans. Students who choose to enroll in the monthly payment plan, payments are expected to arrive the first day of each month. For online students, monthly payment is due 2 weeks prior to the start of each quarter. *Payment plans are not offered for any amount under \$1,200.00.*

## **ONLINE ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE IN FUNERAL SERVICE**

If the general study courses are taken at Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$16,978 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$16,878 tuition.

If general study courses are transferred to Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$12,802 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$12,702 tuition. Cost of tuition is calculated at \$174 per quarter credit hour.

## **ONLINE CERTIFICATE IN FUNERAL DIRECTING**

If the general study courses are taken at Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$10,366 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation, and \$10,266 tuition.

If the general study courses are transferred to Commonwealth, tuition and fees will be \$6,886 payable as follows: \$50 application fee due with application, \$50 graduation fee due 30 days prior to graduation and \$6,876 tuition. Cost of tuition is calculated at \$174 per quarter credit hour.

## **LATE PAYMENTS**

If the monthly tuition is paid after the 5th day of the month, a \$15.00 late fee will be added to the account balance of the current month. If tuition is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, student will forfeit their monthly payment plan and full tuition will be due for the remainder of the program. If tuition is not paid in full by the 20th of the month the student will be terminated and a \$100.00 cancellation fee will be added to the student's account. The student is responsible for all fees on their account including any collection and attorney fees. There is a \$50.00 Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) fee for any returned check given to the Institute for any type of payment. All fees are subject to change without notice.

## **TYPES OF PAYMENT ACCEPTED**

Commonwealth accepts various forms of payment, credit card, debit card, cash, money order, cashier's check, and personal checks. Credit/ debit card payments are accepted in person or via credit card form. CIFS will not accept payment over the phone.

## **BOOKS**

The costs of books are included in tuition. Tuition for online students is due two weeks prior to anticipated start date, to ensure timely delivery of books. Books will be available for pick up the first day of each quarter for students that are in-session. Books for online students, who are outside of Harris County, will be shipped UPS ground/ signature required to the address we have on file. Students will bear the cost of re-shipping books due to insufficient notification of a change of address.

## **EXAMINATION FEES**

ACCUPLACER Examination (THEA Alternative): \$29.00  
National Board Examination: \$500.00 (\$250.00 per section)  
CIFS Certification Examination: \$39.00 per section  
Texas State Law Examination: \$55.00  
Texas State Board Examination: \$250.00

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service administers only the ACCUPLACER and NBE Certification Exam. Above fees are subject to change without notice. Any proctoring exam fee varies by institute.

*Students enrolled in the Online Associate of Applied Science program are required to travel to CIFS campus, at their expense, to complete the required restorative art and embalming labs.*

# Section 6 Financial Assistance/Financial Aid

## TITLE IV FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service (CIFS) participates in Title IV Federal Assistance and the purpose is to remove the financial barriers that prevent access to educational opportunities. Financial Aid programs available to students are:

- Pell Grants
- Stafford Subsidized Loans
- Stafford Unsubsidized Loans
- Parent Plus Loan

Financial aid eligibility and determination will not be made until the student is officially accepted into the program.

## ELIGIBILITY

A student is eligible to receive federal assistance if she/he meets the following criteria:

1. An applicant must be either a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen.
2. Be enrolled and accepted in the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service (**Certificate in Funeral Directing students are not eligible for Title IV Funds**).
3. An applicant must demonstrate a need for Pell Grants and for some loans.
4. An applicant cannot owe an overpayment for previously awarded Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), or student loans.
5. An applicant cannot be in default for previously awarded loans.
6. A student must make SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS as presented in the Academic Policies under GRADING to continue to receive financial assistance. Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress will result in suspension of financial assistance until the student achieves the academic progress standard.
7. The Law suspends aid eligibility for students convicted under federal or state law of selling or possessing illegal drugs.
8. If you are a male aged 18 through 25 you must comply with the Selective Service permission to register by checking a box on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

## HOW TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/FINANCIAL AID

*A student to be considered for Title IV Federal Financial Assistance must do the following:*

1. The applicant must have been accepted to CIFS as outlined in the admission policies before any financial aid is processed.
2. Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at the U.S. Department of Education's web site [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Please use **CIFS school code 003556** to have application routed to the school. You must complete the FAFSA using your previous year's income tax return.
3. You must apply for Financial Assistance using the FAFSA at least four (4) months prior to your scheduled enrollment date.
4. Allow four to six weeks for the Department of Education's processing center to process your FAFSA. Once the Department of Education processes your FAFSA, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) and CIFS will receive an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR).
5. If students' FAFSA is chosen for verification by the U.S. Department of Education then verification paperwork will be requested by the CIFS Financial Aid Office. Documentation requested should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within five working days from date of request.
6. All financial aid documentation and a signed and dated CIFS Award Letter must be completed four weeks prior to the first day of class. If you have not received and accepted the Award Letter, then you will be required to pay your tuition according to the payment plan policy.

## **FEDERAL TITLE IV PROGRAMS AVAILABLE**

### **FEDERAL PELL GRANT**

A need-based federal grant designed to assist the student with her/his degree plan.

### **STAFFORD SUBSIDIZED LOAN**

This is a need-based federal loan available to dependent and independent students. The amount of eligibility is set by the Department of Education. Interest on this loan is deferred while in school and during your grace period, which is 6 months after graduation or date of withdrawal.

### **STAFFORD UNSUBSIDIZED LOAN**

This is a loan available to independent and dependent students and the amount of eligibility is set by the Department of Education. Interest is charged on any dispersed amount and during the students 6 month grace period following graduation or date of withdrawal.

### **PARENT PLUS LOAN**

This is need-based loan available to qualifying parents of dependent students to use for expenses related to cost of attendance not covered by grants and other student aid. Dependent students whose parents request a Plus loan are eligible to borrow up to the cost of attendance less any other financial assistance received. This loan is a credit-based loan.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING LOANS**

1. All loans are subject to the government's origination fee as required by the Department of Education regulations.
2. All loans are subject to interest applied to the principal and are required to be paid by the student.
3. Stafford Subsidized and Unsubsidized loans have as six month grace period beginning on your graduation day or upon termination and repayment starts after the grace period.
4. Repayment of Parent Plus loans begins six weeks (60 days) after the last loan disbursement.
5. Defaulting (failure to repay) on loans permits the loan guarantee agency and federal government to take any legal measures to collect the loan, including denial of issuance or renewal of your professional license.
6. Entrance and Exit counseling are a requirement for subsidized and unsubsidized student loans.
7. Students requesting to have an overage sent to them will have to leave \$100.00 out of their first overage to remain in their student account in the event they terminate from the program. During the last quarter the \$100.00 will be applied toward their tuition.

### **RETURN OF UNEARNED TITLE IV FUNDS**

1. Federal regulations state students may forfeit a portion of their federal student financial assistance if they fail to complete the program of study in which they were enrolled.
2. This policy includes students either receiving or eligible to receive federal student assistance authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act.
3. Title IV includes Pell Grants; Stafford Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans; and Parent Plus Loans awarded under the Federal Family Educational Loan programs and Direct Loan Programs.
4. This Policy includes students that withdraw or terminate from Commonwealth Institute after October 7, 2000 and during the first 60% of any quarter (disbursement period).
5. Eligible Title IV students not completing the required 60% of any quarter are considered NOT to have earned all the federal assistance awarded that disbursement period.
6. The Unearned portion will be determined using the Department of Education's guidelines and returned to the lending agency according to the prescribed guidelines.
7. In some cases the Return of Unearned Title IV funds to the lending agency will result in the student owing Commonwealth Institute for a portion of the tuition and fees.
8. Return of Unearned Title IV funds also may result in the student owing a refund on Unearned Federal assistance to the U.S. Department of Education.

## **OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### **VETERAN BENEFITS**

Veterans requesting educational benefits should contact Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service's Registrar for assistance in obtaining VA benefits. To ensure that your benefits are available when classes start, the applicant should have all paperwork completed and accepted to the Institute two months prior to enrollment. The Veteran is responsible to pay all tuition at the beginning of each quarter. Benefits are paid directly to the Veteran, after the application and certification process is complete. Chapter 33 is paid directly to the school. Veterans missing more than 20 hours of class time within a month or exceed the absenteeism policy as described in the Commonwealth Institute catalog will forfeit their benefits according to the VA guidelines. Veterans taking a Leave of Absence will forfeit their benefits during their leave and will be reinstated upon re-enrollment. Veterans are required to meet satisfactory progress standards as prescribed in Commonwealth Institute's catalog to ensure continued benefits. Failure to do so will also forfeit your benefits.

Only student enrolled in the AAS on campus are eligible to participate in VA Benefits. Commonwealth Institute does NOT qualify to participate in the Hazelwood Act.

### **VA REHABILITATION**

The applicant must meet the same enrollment requirements as the Veterans benefits. The applicant must submit their voucher to the Registrar's Office 60 days prior to enrollment. Benefits are paid directly to Commonwealth institute. Benefits may vary according to the VA guidelines.

### **TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION (TRC)**

The applicant must be accepted to Commonwealth Institute two months prior to enrollment. Applicant must meet the TRC requirements to be eligible for TRC benefits. Applicant must have TRC voucher approved and presented to the Registrar's Office 30 days prior to enrollment. The maximum benefit is \$3,000 from TRC. Any class hours missed by the student will not be covered by TRC. To be eligible for TRC benefits the applicant must apply through the Department of Education using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for Pell Grants. Tuition not covered by TRC or Pell Grants can be paid out of pocket, or if the student is enrolled in the AAS degree they can obtain student loans to cover the additional tuition. The student is required by TRC to submit a copy of their transcript and attendance to their TRC counselors.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

R.E. Waltrip Memorial Scholarship  
Dr. George Poston Memorial Scholarship  
Houston Funeral Directors and Morticians Association Scholarship  
Houston Metropolitan Funeral Directors Association Scholarship  
Southeast Texas Funeral Directors Association Scholarship  
Texas Sales Club Scholarship

# Section 7 Programs of Study

## **HOW COURSEWORK IS CLASSIFIED**

The associate degree curriculum of Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is in compliance with the guidelines established by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. The Funeral Service program and Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service are accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 3414 Ashland Avenue, Suite G, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506 (816) 233-3747. Web: [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org).

Courses are classified into the following areas: Public Health and Technical, Social Science, Business Management, Legal, Regulatory, and Ethical.

### **Coursework is divided into the following areas:**

- Specialized Courses - Those courses approved as the “major” courses in the program which are focused in the areas of funeral directing and embalming. Specialized courses are identified by the prefix MSCI (mortuary science).
- Related Courses - Those courses in the program that are required for career preparation, but are not in the general education block and not in the area of specialization. These include all courses in the certificate program that carry a prefix other than MSCI.
- General Education Courses - Those traditionally offered courses in freshman and sophomore years at institutions of higher learning.
- Course Enumeration - Each course is identified according to the course enumeration system developed by the Gulf Coast Consortium of Colleges. The four-letter prefix represents the department. The first digit indicates whether the course is generally taken during the freshman or sophomore year. The second digit refers to the value of each course in semester hours, the third and fourth refer to the sequence within the subject field.

## GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

Completed Prior to Enrollment or taken at Commonwealth Institute:

Natural Science/Mathematics

BIOL 1408 Biology 1.....4 sem.....(6 qtr.)

Math 1314 College Algebra.....3 sem..... (4 qtr.)

Social/Behavioral Science

PSYC 2301 General Psychology.....3 sem.....(5qtr.)

Humanities/ Fine Arts

ENGL 1301 Composition and Rhetoric 1.....3 sem.....(5 qtr.)

Elective \* (general education course)

HIST 1302 U.S. History II.....3 sem.....(4 qtr.)

Total Hours (by transfer or in residence)      16 sem.....(24 qtr.)

\*The three-semester hour elective may be selected from any general education courses identified in the college catalog. The elective offered at Commonwealth Institute is U.S. History.

Students may complete the general requirements prior to enrollment at Commonwealth Institute or enroll in the general education courses as part of their studies in residency, to receive the AAS degree. If the general education core and the Specialized and Related courses are taken at Commonwealth Institute the AAS degree may be earned in 15 months. If all the general education core courses are transferred to Commonwealth, the degree requirements may be completed in 12 months.

All programs of study at CIFS are intended to be taken as a full-time curriculum. Classes are not allowed to be taken on a part-time basis except in certain special circumstances whereby transfer credit has been granted.

Effective Jan. 1, 2004, for AAS students to be recognized as a graduate of an ABFSE accredited degree, they must take the National Board Exam, a nationally recognized licensure exam given under the auspices of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards. Effective Sept. 1, 2003, the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requires that AAS students, if applicable, must be assessed in reading, writing, and math skills to determine college readiness. Students are exempt from taking a test for the TSI if a qualifying score has been made on the TAKS, SAT, or ACT, within the specified time limits.

## **ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE**

The Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service is issued to students who complete a career education curriculum of college level and character. This degree is designed to lead students to employment as a funeral director and embalmer. The Funeral Service program and Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service are accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 3414 Ashland Avenue, Suite G, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506 (816) 233-3747. Website: [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org).

The Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service (AAS) is designed to teach students the skills and abilities essential for employment as an embalmer and funeral director. Graduates of this program will be able to disinfect, preserve, and/ or restore a dead human body through embalming and restorative art for the purposes of burial or other means of final disposition. They will learn how to conduct funeral service ceremonies of various religious, fraternal, military, traditional, humanistic, and nontraditional customs. Additionally, they will be able to conduct funeral arrangement conferences with families, conduct necessary paperwork in funeral home management, and be aware of proper workplace safety guidelines for funeral service personnel. Graduates of this program may find entry-level employment as an apprentice/intern/provisional licensee with funeral homes, embalming services, cemeteries, pre-need sales, and affiliated funeral service merchandise and embalming chemical companies. Individuals seeking these credentials must also meet the requirements of the appropriate licensing agencies.

To earn the AAS degree, the student must fulfill all requirements for the General Education Core of 24 quarter/16 semester hours as outlined below, plus the Specialized and Related Courses. The AAS degree is an accelerated program. Students will be able to complete the program in 15 months (five, eleven- week quarters). If a student transfers in all of the General Education Courses, it will take them 12 months (four, eleven- week quarters) to complete the program.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION SUMMARY IN THE AAS PROGRAM**

- Passing grade for each course and achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all coursework completed at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service;
- Discharge of all financial obligations to the Institute 30 days prior to commencement;
- Completion of required arterial and cavity embalming of ten (10) human remains and restorative art laboratory;
- Completion of both sections of NBE; and
- Must satisfy all requirements of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI).
- For those receiving federal student loans, complete financial aid exit counseling.

# COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

## ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE

Prefix & Number	Course Title	Lecture	Lab	Extern	Clock Hours	Total Credit Hours
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES:</b>						
Completed Prior to Admission or Taken at Commonwealth						
BIOL 1408	Biology 1	66	0	0	66	6 qtr.
MATH 1314	College Algebra	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
ENGL 1301	Composition and Rhetoric	55	0	0	55	5 qtr.
PSYC 2301	General Psychology	55	0	0	55	5 qtr.
HIST 1302	United States History II	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>					<b>264</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SPECIALIZED AND RELATED COURSES:</b>						
<b>First Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
MSCI 1201	Anatomy 1	33	0	0	33	3 qtr.
BUSI 2304	Business Communication	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1212	Funeral Directing	33	0	10	43	3 qtr.
MSCI 1317	History of Funeral Service	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1115	Occupational Safety & Ethics	22	0	0	22	2 qtr.
BUSI 1302	Operating a Business	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>230</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Second Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
MSCI 1202	Anatomy 2	33	0	0	33	3 qtr.
BUSI 2301	Business Law	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1203	Embalming 1	33	0	0	33	3 qtr.
MSCI 1307	Microbiology	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1314	Mortuary Administration	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1118	Sociology of Funeral Service	22	0	0	22	2 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>220</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Third Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
MSCI 1204	Embalming 2 & Externship	33	0	10	43	3 qtr.
MSCI 1306	Forensic Pathology	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1313	Funeral Merchandising	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1219	Mortuary Law	33	0	0	33	3 qtr.
MSCI 1208	Restorative Art 1	22	0	0	22	2 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>186</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Fourth Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
MSCI 1316	Counseling/ Dynamics of Grief	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1005	Embalming 3 & Externship	22	0	10	32	2 qtr.
OFAD 1307	Office Accounting	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1109	Restorative Art 2 & Lab	22	11	0	33	2 qtr.
MSCI 1020	Board Review	11	0	0	11	1 qtr.
MSCI 1310	Thanatochemistry	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>208</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1067</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1108</b>	<b>97</b>

## **CERTIFICATE in FUNERAL DIRECTING**

The Certificate in Funeral Directing is designed to teach students the skills and abilities essential for employment as a funeral director in the state of Texas only. It is the students' responsibility to verify that the certification program is recognized in the state for which they are seeking licensure. This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education. **Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required.**

Graduates of this program will be able to prepare, other than by embalming, a dead human body for burial, or other means of final disposition. They will learn how to conduct funeral service ceremonies of various religious, fraternal, military, traditional, humanistic, and nontraditional customs. Additionally, they will be able to conduct funeral arrangement conferences with families, conduct necessary paperwork in home management, and be aware of proper workplace safety guidelines for funeral service personnel. Graduates of this program may find entry-level employment as an apprentice/intern/provisional licensee with funeral homes, cemeteries, pre-need sales, and affiliated funeral service merchandise companies.

In addition to meeting the requirements for admission found elsewhere in this catalog, the Certificate in Funeral Directing also requires the completion of 13 semester/20 quarter hours of general education courses (three, eleven- week quarters). These general education courses may be completed at any regionally accredited college or university and transferred to Commonwealth Institute; or these courses may be taken in residency at Commonwealth.

Students with the general education courses may complete this program in six months (two, eleven- week quarters). Please refer to the college calendar for dates of enrollment.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION SUMMARY IN THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

- Passing grade for each course and achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all coursework completed at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service;
- Discharge of all financial obligations to the Institute 30 days prior to commencement.

**Students enrolled in the Certificate in Funeral Directing program are NOT eligible to participate in federal aid program.**

# COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

## CERTIFICATE in FUNERAL DIRECTING

Prefix & Number	Course Title	Lecture	Lab	Extern	Clock Hours	Credit Hours
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES:</b>						
Completed Prior to Admission or Taken at Commonwealth						
BIOL 1408	Biology 1	66	0	0	66	6 qtr.
MATH 1314	College Algebra	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
ENGL 1301	Composition and Rhetoric	55	0	0	55	5 qtr.
PSYC 2301	General Psychology	55	0	0	55	5 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>					<b>220</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>SPECIALIZED AND RELATED COURSES:</b>						
<b>First Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
MSCI 1212	Funeral Directing	33	0	10	43	3 qtr.
MSCI 1313	Funeral Merchandising	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1317	History of Funeral Service	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1219	Mortuary Law	33	0	0	33	3 qtr.
MSCI 1115	Occupational Safety & Ethics	22	0	0	22	2 qtr.
BUSI 1302	Operating a Business	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>230</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Second Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>				
BUSI 2301	Business Law	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1316	Counseling/ Dynamics of Grief	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1314	Mortuary Administration	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
OFAD 1307	Office Accounting	44	0	0	44	4 qtr.
MSCI 1118	Sociology of Funeral Service	22	0	0	22	2 qtr.
MSCI 1020	Board Review	11	0	0	11	1 qtr.
<b>Total Hours</b>					<b>209</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>649</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>59</b>

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

Distance learning is a good alternative for many people, but is not a perfect match for everyone. The independent nature of online college requires a self-motivated, organized, and committed individual who will not fall victim to procrastination. Young students who crave a more traditional 'college experience' may also feel unsatisfied by the isolation.

Also remember that you will be self-taught to a certain degree in an online program. Interaction with professors and peers may be minimal, and you should feel comfortable with extensive reading and the self-propelled nature of distance learning.

If you feel that earning an online degree may be the right choice for you, it is important that you honestly assess yourself using the following criteria at a minimum:

1. Have you given in-depth consideration as to why you are considering distance education versus traditional classroom based instruction? There is a misperception that courses taken via online learning are “easier.” In fact, the self-discipline and time commitment required of distance courses has been described by our students as more rigorous and challenging than being in the classroom.
2. Are you proficient with technology? Do you feel comfortable using computers, communicating through email, uploading documents, etc.?
3. Do you have the time to devote to full-time coursework (CIFS does not offer part-time programs of study)? Online courses require additional rigor when compared to on-campus classes. If you work full-time and/or have family commitments and extracurricular activities, it may be difficult for you to devote proper time for coursework. You will be taking National and/or State Board Examinations for licensure at the conclusion of your studies.
4. Student indicating their intent to enroll into the distance education program will need to complete the online readiness survey administered by the Institute. The survey is intended to assess a prospective student's compatibility with online study and requires honest self-assessment on behalf of the prospective student.

## **ONLINE ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE**

A student may select to complete the Associate of Applied Science degree via web-based instruction (on-line or eLearning). Courses taken through this option follow the same academic term and length, and have the same rigorous academic and admission requirements as those taken on-campus. The online program is lesson-based. Students complete eight to ten lessons per module. A student must complete a lesson before proceeding to the next lesson within a module. Modules (as sequenced below) are taken concurrently throughout the quarter. For example, a student enrolled in first quarter general education modules will complete modules 1 – 4 during the quarter.

An Associate of Applied Science degree is issued to students who complete a career education curriculum of college level and character. This Degree is designed to lead students to employment as a funeral director and embalmer. The Associate of Applied Science Degree at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE), 3414 Ashland Avenue, Suite G, St. Joseph, Missouri 64506 (816) 233-3747. Website: [www.abfse.org](http://www.abfse.org)

The Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service (AAS) is designed to teach students the skills and abilities essential for employment as an embalmer and funeral director. Graduates of this program will be able to disinfect, preserve, and/ or restore a dead human body through embalming and restorative art for the purposes of burial or other means of final disposition. They will learn how to conduct funeral service ceremonies of various religious, fraternal, military, traditional, humanistic, and nontraditional customs. Additionally, they will be able to conduct funeral arrangement conferences with families, conduct necessary paperwork in funeral home management, and be aware of proper workplace safety guidelines for funeral service personnel. Graduates of this program may find entry-level employment as an apprentice/intern/provisional licensee with funeral homes, embalming services, cemeteries, pre-need sales, and affiliated funeral service merchandise and embalming chemical companies. Individuals seeking these credentials must also meet the requirements of the appropriate licensing agencies.

To earn the AAS degree, the student must fulfill all requirements for the General Education Core of 24 quarter/16 semester hours as outlined below, plus the Specialized and Related Courses. The AAS degree is an accelerated program. Students will be able to complete the program in 15 months (five, eleven- week quarters). If a student transfers in all of the General Education Courses, it will take them 12 months (four, eleven- week quarters) to complete the program. Graduation requirements include passing each of the prescribed courses, accumulating an overall cumulative GPA of 2.0, successful completion of comprehensive certification examinations related to funeral service arts and science, and fulfillment of financial obligations to Commonwealth Institute 30 days prior to graduation, and complete both sections of the National Board Examination.

All online students must successfully complete the online orientation course prior to beginning their courses.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION SUMMARY IN THE AAS PROGRAM**

- Passing grade for each course and achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all coursework completed at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service;
- Discharge of all financial obligations to the Institute 30 days prior to commencement;
- Completion of required arterial and cavity embalming of ten (10) human remains and restorative art laboratory;
- Completion of both sections of NBE; and
- Must satisfy all requirements of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI).
- For those receiving federal student loans, complete financial aid exit counseling.

## **EXTERNSHIPS AND LABS**

Students are responsible for being in residence, at their expense, to demonstrate technical competency in both restorative art and embalming. During your stay you will complete your 10 clinical embalming cases and required restorative art lab. For additional information on required labs for Online Associate of Applied Science Degree program, see the Embalming Lab and Confidentiality section in the student handbook.

## **TESTING POLICY FOR ONLINE STUDENTS**

All exams with the exception on midterm and final exam will be taken over the Internet. Midterm and final exams must be completed in a proctored environment.

## **PROCTORING POLICY FOR ONLINE STUDENTS**

All midterm and final exams are to be completed by the online students in a proctored environment. Students must request approval from the Dean of Academics prior to the exam dates for approved test sites and requirements. Students are also able to fulfill the proctored policy by taking their exam at the campus.

## **PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE PROGRAM**

Student's progress is evaluated throughout the online program as Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service receives each lesson. Progress is documented as students complete lessons and graded assignments. Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average as evaluated at the end of each quarter. If at the end of the quarter, the student has not completed the required modules, the student's enrollment shall be terminated. Additionally, students have one week to complete a lesson. Failure to turn in a lesson may result in a student being placed on academic probation.

# COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

## ONLINE ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE

Module	Prefix & Number	Course Title	Lessons	Credit Hours
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES:</b>				
Completed Prior to Admission or Taken at Commonwealth				
Module 1:	BIOL 1408	Biology 1	10	6 qtr.
Module 2:	ENGL 1301	Composition and Rhetoric	10	5 qtr.
Module 3:	PSYC 2301	General Psychology	10	5 qtr.
Module 4:	MATH 1314	College Algebra	10	4 qtr.
Module 5:	HIST 1302	United States History II	10	4 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>			<b>50</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>SPECIALIZED AND RELATED COURSES:</b>				
<b>First Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>		
Module 1:	BUSI 2304	Business Communication	8	4 qtr.
Module 2:	BUSI 1302	Operating a Business	8	4 qtr.
Module 3:	MSCI 1201	Anatomy 1	8	3 qtr.
Module 4:	MSCI 1212	Funeral Directing	8	3 qtr.
Module 5:	MSCI 1317	History of Funeral Service	8	4 qtr.
Module 6:	MSCI 1115	Occupational Safety & Ethics	8	2 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>			<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Second Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>		
Module 7:	MSCI 1202	Anatomy 2	8	3 qtr.
Module 8:	BUSI 2301	Business Law	8	4 qtr.
Module 9:	MSCI 1203	Embalming 1	8	3 qtr.
Module 10:	MSCI 1307	Microbiology	8	4 qtr.
Module 11:	MSCI 1314	Mortuary Administration	8	4 qtr.
Module 12:	MSCI 1118	Sociology of Funeral Service	8	2 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>			<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Third Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>		
Module 13:	MSCI 1204	Embalming 2 & Externship	8	3 qtr.
Module 14:	MSCI 1313	Funeral Merchandising	8	4 qtr.
Module 15:	MSCI 1219	Mortuary Law	8	3 qtr.
Module 16:	MSCI 1306	Forensic Pathology	8	4 qtr.
Module 17:	MSCI 1208	Restorative Art 1	8	2 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>			<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Fourth Quarter</b>		<b>Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service</b>		
Module 18:	MSCI 1310	Thanatochemistry	8	4 qtr.
Module 19:	MSCI 1005	Embalming 3 & Externship	8	2 qtr.
Module 20:	MSCI 1109	Restorative Art 2 & Lab	8	2 qtr.
Module 21:	MSCI 1316	Counseling/ Dynamics of Grief	8	4 qtr.
Module 22:	OFAD 1307	Office Accounting	8	4 qtr.
Module 23:	MSCI 1020	Board Review	8	1 qtr.
<b>Total Hours:</b>			<b>48</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>			<b>234</b>	<b>97</b>

## **ONLINE CERTIFICATE in FUNERAL DIRECTING**

The Certificate in Funeral Directing is designed to teach students the skills and abilities essential for employment as a funeral director in the state of Texas only. It is the students' responsibility to verify that the certification program is recognized in the state for which they are seeking licensure. A student may select to complete the certificate in funeral directing via web-based instruction (on-line or eLearning). Courses taken through this option follow the same academic term and length, and have the same rigorous academic and admission requirements as those taken on-campus. The online program is lesson-based. Students complete eight to ten lessons per module. A student must complete a lesson before proceeding to the next lesson within a module. Modules (as sequenced below) are taken concurrently throughout the quarter. This academic program is designed to meet specific state or professional needs. It is not accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education.

Graduates of this program will be able to prepare, other than by embalming, a dead human body for burial, or other means of final disposition. They will learn how to conduct funeral service ceremonies of various religious, fraternal, military, traditional, humanistic, and nontraditional customs. Additionally, they will be able to conduct funeral arrangement conferences with families, conduct necessary paperwork in home management, and be aware of proper workplace safety guidelines for funeral service personnel. Graduates of this program may find entry-level employment as an apprentice/intern/provisional licensee with funeral homes, cemeteries, pre-need sales, and affiliated funeral service merchandise companies.

In addition to meeting the requirements for admission found elsewhere in this catalog, the Certificate in Funeral Directing also requires the completion of 13 semester/20 quarter hours of general education courses (three, eleven- week quarters). These general education courses may be completed at any regionally accredited college or university and transferred to Commonwealth Institute; or these courses may be taken in residency at Commonwealth.

Students with the general education courses may complete this program in six months (two, eleven- week quarters). Please refer to the college calendar for dates of enrollment. Students in this program are not eligible to participate in federal student aid programs or in Commonwealth Institute's scholarship program.

Students graduating from this program are not eligible to take the National Board Examination or any state board examination for which graduation from an ABFSE accredited program is required. All online students must complete the orientation course prior to beginning their courses.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION SUMMARY IN THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

- Passing grade for each course and achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all coursework completed at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service;
- Discharge of all financial obligations to the Institute 30 days prior to commencement.

*Students enrolled in the Online Certificate in Funeral Directing program are **NOT eligible to participate in federal aid program.***

**PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE CERTIFICATE IN FUNERAL DIRECTING PROGRAM**

Student’s progress is evaluated throughout the online program as Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service receives each lesson. Progress is documented as students complete lessons and received graded assignments. Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average as evaluated at the end of each quarter. If at the end of the quarter, the student has not completed the required modules, the student’s enrollment shall be terminated. Additionally, students have one week to complete a lesson. Failure to turn in a lesson may result in a student being placed on academic probation.

**COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE OF FUNERAL SERVICE  
ONLINE CERTIFICATE in FUNERAL DIRECTING**

Module	Prefix & Number	Course Title	Lessons	Credit Hours
<b>GENERAL EDUCATION MODULES:</b>				
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</b>				
Module 1:	BIOL 1408	Biology 1	10	6 qtr.
Module 2:	ENGL 1301	Composition and Rhetoric	10	5 qtr.
Module 3:	PSYC 2301	General Psychology	10	5 qtr.
Module 4:	MATH 1314	College Algebra	10	4 qtr.
<b>Total Lessons &amp; Credit Hours:</b>			<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>SPECIALIZED AND RELATED MODULES:</b>				
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter</b>				
Module 5:	BUSI 1302	Operating a Business	8	4 qtr.
Module 6:	MSCI 1212	Funeral Directing	8	3 qtr.
Module 7:	MSCI 1317	History of Funeral Service	8	4 qtr.
Module 8:	MSCI 1115	Occupational Safety & Ethics	8	2 qtr.
Module 9:	MSCI 1313	Funeral Merchandising	8	4 qtr.
Module 10:	MSCI 1219	Mortuary Law	8	3 qtr.
<b>Total Lessons &amp; Credit Hours:</b>			<b>48</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>				
Module 11:	BUSI 2301	Business Law	8	4 qtr.
Module 12:	MSCI 1314	Mortuary Administration	8	4 qtr.
Module 13:	MSCI 1118	Sociology of Funeral Service	8	2 qtr.
Module 14:	MSCI 1316	Counseling/ Dynamics of Grief	8	4 qtr.
Module 15:	OFAD 1307	Office Accounting	8	4 qtr.
Module 16:	MSCI 1020	Board Review	8	1 qtr.
<b>Total Lessons &amp; Credit Hours:</b>			<b>48</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>			<b>136</b>	<b>59</b>

*Maximum time to complete program = 4 quarters.*

# Section 8 Course Descriptions by Area

## **EMBALMING ARTS AND SCIENCES**

This series intertwines the basic and public health sciences with embalming and restorative art, in order that the prospective embalmer can develop expert competencies in the preparation of human remains, while effectively protecting his/her own health and in the broadest sense, the health of the general public whom they represent.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH AND TECHNICAL**

**Anatomy 1- MSCI 1201**.....3 quarter hours.

In this course, the student will learn correct terminology and the basic organ systems of the body. Topics include skeletal, digestive, excretory, respiratory, integumentary, endocrine, reproductive, and nervous systems. (33/0/0/3)

**Anatomy 2- MSCI 1202**.....3 quarter hours, Prerequisite Anatomy I MSCI 1202 or equivalent

A continuation of the study of the systems of the body, the student will learn the muscular, lymph, and circulatory systems. (33/0/0/3)

**Embalming 1- MSCI 1203**.....3 quarter hours Prerequisite: Occ. Safety MSCI 1115

The student will learn the history of embalming, early contributors to the field and their influence to the embalming procedures. The student will learn the instruments, equipment, and chemicals used in the embalming process. The student will learn how to perform case analysis and determine which procedure(s) will be used.

**Embalming 2 and Externship- MSCI 1204**.....3 quarter hours Prerequisite: Embalming 1 MSCI 1203

The student will learn linear and anatomical guides and anatomical limits and how they will apply them to the embalming process. They will learn methods of creating injection pressure and how to calculate solution strengths. They will learn the various chemicals and their properties used in the embalming process. The student will learn how to perform cavity embalming and the importance of this procedure. The student is required to actively participate in the arterial and cavity embalming of ten (10) human remains minimum. Cases must be completed under the direct supervision of Commonwealth Institute's clinical embalming instructors or Commonwealth's clinical supervisor. Cases are available at Commonwealth Institute's preparation room. (33/0/10/3)

**Embalming 3 and Externship MSCI 1005**.....2 quarter hours. Prerequisite: Embalming 2 MSCI 1204

The student will learn the embalming treatment and the handling of special cases. The student is required to actively participate in the arterial and cavity embalming of ten (10) human remains minimum. Cases must be completed under the direct supervision of Commonwealth Institute's clinical embalming instructors or Commonwealth's clinical supervisor. Cases are available at Commonwealth Institute's preparation room. (33/0/10/3)

**Forensic Pathology- MSCI 1306** 4 quarter hours.

Student will learn general disease processes including terminology related to disease; causes of disease, cellular reaction to injury; structural abnormalities, inflammation and repair; neoplasms and cysts; various diseases of the blood, heart, blood vessels, digestive system, respiratory tract, urinary and reproductive systems, nervous system, bones and joints, and endocrine glands. (44/0/0/4)

**Microbiology- MSCI 1307**.....4 quarter hours.

Students will learn aspects of microbiology related to the causative agents of disease, methods of transmission, and techniques for disinfection and sterilization including, but not limited to, beneficial microorganisms, pathogens, host-parasite interactions, natural and acquired immunity, bacterial morphology, and physiology. (44/0/0/4)

**Restorative Art 1- MSCI 1208** .....2 quarter hours.

An orientation and introduction to restorative art. The student will learn terminology, terms of anatomical direction, bones and muscles of the cranium, facial proportions, facial profiles, geometric head shapes and detailed study of the parts of the features. Also included are the classifications and descriptions of facial markings. (22/0/0/2)

**Restorative Art 2 and Lab- MSCI 1109**.....2 quarter hours. Prerequisite Restorative Art 1 MSCI 1208

A continuation of Restorative Art. 1, the student will learn color theory, cosmetic applications, wax treatments, suturing, non wax treatments, hair restoration, hypodermic tissue building, and death masks. The laboratory is designed to supplement the theoretical information provided in the lecture class. Students model facial features from clay and affix to a plastic skull, and practice mixing and applying cosmetics to a facial mask. (22/11/0/2)

**Thanatochemistry- MSCI 1310**.....4 quarter hours.

Students will learn the fundamental concepts of chemistry, atomic structure, the periodic table, valence, and chemical equations. They study types of solutions, are introduced to organic chemistry and biochemistry and will learn how chemistry is used in the embalming process. (44/0/0/4)

## MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

This series of courses is designed to develop the prospective funeral director into an effective management person, capable of making intelligent and ethical business decisions based upon the application of good business principles.

### **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

**Funeral Directing- MSCI 1212**.....3 quarter hours.

A course in directing the various types of funeral services. The student will learn funeral service professional ethics and the role of the funeral director in conducting various religious, fraternal, military, traditional, non traditional, and humanistic funeral ceremonies including cultural, ethnic, and geographic customs. (33/10/0/3)

**Funeral Merchandising- MSCI 1313**.....4 quarter hours.

A course in funeral home management and practice that reviews the aims and objectives of the funeral home practitioner. The student will learn the component parts and the construction of caskets and outer burial containers and how to professionally arrange the selection room and the methodology for pricing funeral service merchandise. Various experts from the funeral service profession provide special presentations and/or field trips that will incorporate the theoretical with practical aspects of funeral service merchandising. (44/0/0/4)

**Mortuary Administration- MCSI 1314**.....4 quarter hours. Prerequisite: Operating a Business BUSI 1302

A course in funeral home management and practice. The student will learn contemporary code of ethics for funeral service, various facets of funeral service practice including: the steps from first call to final disposition, funeral records and forms, Social Security and Veteran benefits, professional relationships, establishing and maintaining funeral home facilities and equipment, and supervision and training personnel. The student will also learn the techniques in conducting the funeral arrangement through role-play exercises. (44/0/0/4)

**Occupational Safety & Ethics- MSCI 1115.....2 quarter hours.**

The student will learn workplace safety guidelines as related to funeral service personnel. This will include: Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines for Hazard Communication Standard, Formaldehyde Monitoring, Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, Infection Control and Preparation Room Requirements. Ethical behavior and standards are explored. (22/0/0/2)

**Office Accounting- OFAD 1307.....4 quarter hours.**

This course is designed to develop an understanding of an accounting system. The student will learn how to analyze business transactions and how they relate to the accounting cycle, primarily a small service and merchandising business. The student will learn journalizing, posting, preparing a trial balance, completing financial reports and computing payroll and payroll taxes, and use of the computer as a business tool. (44/0/0/4)

**Operating a Business- BUSI 1302.....4 quarter hours.**

The student will learn the practical considerations involved in starting and operating a business. Topics include analyzing potential market, acquiring financial backing, establishing record-keeping systems, making marketing and pricing decisions, managing financial and human resources, purchasing, controlling inventory, sales forecasting, meeting legal requirements, and using professional resources. (44/0/0/4)

## **SOCIAL SCIENCES**

This series of courses is designed to: (1) develop an appreciation of funeral practices in terms of their origin and development, as well as their present and future place in society; (2) develop an understanding and sensitivity of the needs of the bereaved at the time of death; and (3) to develop the proficiency to meet those needs in a professional and meaningful manner.

### **SOCIAL SCIENCE**

**Business Communications- BUSI 2304.....4 quarter hours.**

The student will learn the principles of effective written and oral business communications. Activities include writing business messages for a variety of business situations, writing both formal and informal business reports and presenting business data orally. (44/0/0/4)

**Counseling/Dynamics of Grief- MSCI 1316.....4 quarter hours.**

The student will learn how grief affects the deceased's family and the role of the funeral in grief resolution. Grief reactions, grief cycles, and the various stages of grief will be explored. The student will learn an understanding of the basic methods and procedures of grief counseling and the many elements that a funeral director brings into the counseling session. The student learns to recognize and understands his/her own personal resources for coping with loss situations. (44/0/0/4)

**History of Funeral Service- MSCI 1317.....4 quarter hours.**

This course traces the development of funeral service from the ancient Egyptians to modern times. The students will learn the historical roots of modern practices. (44/0/0/4)

**Sociology of Funeral Service- MSCI 1118.....2 quarter hours.**

A general survey of sociology, the orientation, definition, application and purpose of culture, mores, folkways, and the study of the family unit. The students will learn how each of these impact death rituals. (22/0/0/2)

## **LEGAL REGULATORY AND ETHICAL**

### **Business Law - BUSI 2301.....4 quarter hours.**

A course in the principles of law which form the legal framework for business activities. The student will learn the legal framework for business activities that includes applicable statutes, torts, contracts, personal and real property, wills and trusts, and consumer law. (44/0/0/4)

### **Mortuary Law - MSCI 1219.....3 quarter hours Prerequisite: Business Law 2301**

This course will provide the legal fundamentals that apply to funeral service. The students will learn the corporative state laws, rules, and regulations that pertain to funeral service; laws regarding the rights and duties and responsibilities of funeral service professional; and licensure requirements for funeral directors, embalmers and funeral establishments. (33/0/0/3)

### **Board Review- MSCI 1020.....1 quarter hour**

This course is customized to acclimate each student to the expectations of licensure examinations. Including both current rules and regulations of the state(s) in which they intend to seek licensure and subject matter found on the National Board Examination (or comparable examination). As applicable, this course will help prepare, through simulated board examinations, the student for academic success on state law exam(s) required of individuals seeking licensure in the various parts of the country and on the National Board Examination. (11/0/0/1)

## **GENERAL EDUCATION CORE**

### **Biology 1 - BIOL 1408 .....6 quarter hours. Prerequisite: none**

A contemporary course in which the student will learn the applications of the scientific method, cellular and molecular biology, biochemistry, classical and human genetics, and virology. (66/0/0/6)

### **College Algebra - MATH 1314.....4 quarter hours Prerequisite: none**

Topics include quadratics, polynomial and exponential functions, graphing, linear equations & inequalities, factoring techniques and algebraic fractions. (44/0/0/4)

### **Composition and Rhetoric 1- ENGL 1301.....5 quarter hours. Prerequisite: none**

This course provides students with the rhetorical foundations that prepares them for the demands of professional writing. The student will learn how to recognize and deploy the strategies and processes that translate into effective written products in a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes. (55/0/0/5)

### **General Psychology - PSYC 2301.....5 quarter hours. Prerequisite: none**

The student will learn the elementary principles of human behavior. (55/0/0/5)

### **United States History II - HIST 1302.....4 quarter hours Prerequisite: none**

A survey of U.S. history from the end of Reconstruction to the present. The student will learn how the United States emerged as a world power and the subsequent assumption of international responsibilities. (44/0/0/4)

# Section 9 Continuing Education

Commonwealth Institute offers various continuing education programs throughout the year to meet license continuation requirements for the state of Texas. Please contact the office or visit our webpage for details on upcoming CEU events.

RULE §203.30 of the Texas Administrative Code:

(f) Credit hours required.

(1) Licensed funeral directors and embalmers who actively practice in this state are required to obtain 16 hours of continuing education every two year renewal period. A licensee may receive credit for a course only once during a renewal period.

(2) The following are mandatory continuing education hours and subjects for each renewal period:

(A) Ethics--2 credit hours--this course must at least cover principals of right and wrong, the philosophy of morals, and standards of professional behavior.

(B) Law Updates--2 credit hours--this course must at least cover the most current versions of Texas Occupations Code Chapter 651, and Chapters 201 and 203 of this title.

(C) Vital Statistics Requirements and Regulations--2 credit hours--this course must at least cover Texas Health and Safety Code Chapters 193, 711 - 715 and 25 TAC Chapter 181.

Please visit the Texas Funeral Service Commission website <http://www.tfsc.state.tx.us/> or contact the Commission at (512) 936-2474 for full details regarding continuing education requirements.

# Section 10 Academic Calendar

## 2014

### JANUARY

6: Winter Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class

20 : Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no classes

### FEBRUARY

17: President's Day, no classes

### MARCH

7: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.; Close of  
enrollment for Spring term

18-20: Winter Qtr. Final Exams

21: End Winter Qtr.

22- April 6: Break

### APRIL

7: Spring Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class

### MAY

26: Memorial Day, no classes

### JUNE

6: Close of enrollment for Summer term

12: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.  
Students

16-18: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

17-19: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

18-19: General Education Final Exams

20: End Spring Qtr; Commencement  
Ceremony

21- July 6: Break

### JULY

7: Summer Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class

### AUGUST

22: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.

### SEPTEMBER

1: Labor Day, no classes

6: Close of enrollment for Fall term

16-18: Summer Quarterfinal Exams

19: End Summer Qtr.

20- October 5: Break

### OCTOBER

6 – Fall Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class

### NOVEMBER

27: Thanksgiving Day, no classes

### DECEMBER

5: Close of enrollment for Winter term

11: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.  
Students

15-17: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

16-18: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

17-18: General Education Final Exams

19: End Fall Qtr; Commencement  
Ceremony

20-January 4: Break

# 2015

## JANUARY

**5: Winter Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class**

19: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no classes

## FEBRUARY

16: President's Day, no classes

## MARCH

6: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.; Close of  
Enrollment for Spring Term

17-19: Winter Qtr. Final Exams

20: End Winter Qtr.

21- April 5: Break

## APRIL

**6: Spring Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class**

## MAY

25: Memorial Day, no classes

## JUNE

6: Close of enrollment for Summer term

11: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.

Students

15-17: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

16-18: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

17-18: General Education Final Exams

19: End Spring Qtr; Commencement  
Ceremony

20- July 5: Break

## JULY

**6: Summer Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class**

## AUGUST

28: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.

## SEPTEMBER

5: Close of enrollment for Fall term

7: Labor Day, no classes

15-17: Summer Quarterfinal Exams

18: End Summer Qtr.

19- October 4: Break

## OCTOBER

**5 – Fall Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class**

## NOVEMBER

26: Thanksgiving Day, no classes

## DECEMBER

4: Close of enrollment for Winter term

10: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.

Students

14-16: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

15-17: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams

16-17: General Education Final Exams

18: End Fall Qtr; Commencement

Ceremony

19-Jan. 3: Break

# 2016

## JANUARY

**4: Winter Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class**

18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, no classes

## FEBRUARY

15: President's Day, no classes

## **MARCH**

- 4: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.; Close of enrollment for Spring term
- 15-17: Winter Qtr. Final Exams
- 18: End Winter Qtr.
- 19-04/03: Break

## **APRIL**

- 4: Spring Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class**

## **MAY**

- 30: Memorial Day, no classes

## **JUNE**

- 5: Close of enrollment for Summer term
- 9: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Students
- 12-14: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams
- 14-16: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams
- 15 - 16: General Education Final Exams
- 17: End Spring Qtr; Commencement Ceremony
- 18-07/04: Break

## **JULY**

- 5: Summer Qtr. Begins,  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtrs. of Specialized  
& Related courses; Orientation  
Day for Incoming Class**

## **AUGUST**

- 26: Open House 6 P.M. to 9 P.M.

## **SEPTEMBER**

- 5: Labor Day, no classes
- 3: Close of enrollment for Fall term
- 13-15: Summer Quarterfinal Exams
- 16: End Summer Qtr.
- 17-10/02: Break

## **OCTOBER**

- 3: Fall Qtr. Begins,  
G.E. Core Qtr, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtrs. of  
Specialized & Related courses;  
Orientation Day for Incoming Class**

## **NOVEMBER**

- 24: Thanksgiving Day, no classes

## **DECEMBER**

- 3: Close of enrollment for Winter term
- 8: Comprehensive Exams, 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Students
- 11-13: 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. Final Exams
- 12-14: 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. Final Exams
- 13-14: General Education Final Exams
- 16: End Fall Qtr; Commencement Ceremony
- 17-01/02: Break

# Section 11 General Policies

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Developing and maintaining a good class attendance record is an important facet of each student's professional development. The Executive Director of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards has indicated that students having excellent class attendance will score better on the NBE. Each student is expected to attend all classes as scheduled, on time, and to remain in the classes for their full duration. The student also has the responsibility to complete assigned work, and be present for examinations at the time they are administered to entire class.

Commonwealth Institute's attendance policies are based on class hours of absence accumulated during any academic quarter of study. Instructors check and record attendance in each class. To be counted present, the student must be in attendance for the entire period. Absences are not classified as excused or un-excused. The daily attendance is transferred weekly to the Master Attendance Record.

A student enrolled in the Associate of Applied Science in Funeral Service Degree program who is absent for more than 20% of their scheduled classes in a quarter will have their enrollment terminated. Students in the Certificate in Funeral Directing program who are absent for more than 20% of the total course hours in their program will have their enrollment terminated.

Students enrolled under various Veterans' programs or other funding agencies will be required to meet the requirements for attendance of the sponsoring organization.

## APPEAL PROCEDURE

*A student may appeal an attendance termination. Documentation supporting medical or family emergencies must be submitted to the Dean of Academics of Commonwealth Institute within three business days of termination notification.*

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves of absence may be granted in emergency situations and for military service obligation. A leave of absence may not exceed twelve school days, and only two leaves of absence are permitted during any consecutive 12-month period. A student requesting a leave of absence must do so in writing. The request must contain the specific start and return times, dates and reason for the requested leave. If a student fails to return from leave as scheduled, enrollment will be terminated and proper refund will be made in accordance with the refund policy of the Institute. All test and make up materials must be completed within seven business days upon returning back to class.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The Institute has established a grievance procedure to be used by students of Commonwealth to ensure their right to due process. This right to due process is administered without regard to race, creed, national origin, or sex. The grievance must be submitted in writing to Commonwealth Institute within 30 days of the event. Failure to file any grievance within the specified time periods shall be deemed a waiver thereof.

The Dean of Academics or designee shall investigate the alleged grievance, and an attempt will be made to resolve the matter informally with the parties involved.

A member of Commonwealth's Institute's administration (Dean of Students or Dean of Academics) shall serve as the hearing officer and may resolve the matter of alleged violation through an informal hearing. The legal rules of evidence do not apply at the informal hearing. Evidence that possesses probative value and is commonly accepted by reasonable people in the conduct of the affairs may be admitted. The student is presumed innocent of the alleged violation unless the hearing officer is convinced by the evidence that the student is guilty of the violation. The hearing officer may impose one or more of the following penalties, if the student is found guilty of the alleged violation: suspension of eligibility for extracurricular activities, letter of warning, suspension for up to the remainder of the current quarter, restitution for damages, denial of degree, or permanent severance from Commonwealth Institute.

A student is entitled to appeal the decision of the Dean of Academics or Dean of Students to the President of Commonwealth Institute. The President shall review the matter and render the final decision in a timely manner. No reprisal of any kind will be taken by the Board, an administrator, or an employee of Commonwealth Institute against any person bringing a grievance under this procedure.

Any grievances unresolved by Commonwealth Institute may be forwarded to the Texas Workforce Commission, Proprietary Schools, 101 East 15th Street, Austin, TX 78778-0001, (512) 936-3100. Please see "Student Complaint Policy" in the *Student Handbook*.

## **DRESS CODE**

Funeral service is a conservative experience. Commonwealth Institute expects you to take pride in your personal appearance. Personal grooming and a businesslike appearance are vital to each student's success.

For daily classes, business casual clothing is acceptable, as long as it does not cause a disruption in the educational environment. Hats and sunglasses are not permitted in the classroom. On days of field trips and guest speakers, students are expected to dress in the mode of contemporary funeral service practitioners: navy or black suits, white shirt or blouse, dark shoes, conservative ties, and avoid extreme hair styles.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

The office will not disturb scheduled classes unless the telephone call for the student is an emergency. Messages of an important nature will be posted on the door of the classroom.

## **PREGNANCY POLICY**

If a student is pregnant, planning to become pregnant or becomes pregnant while in embalming clinical training at Commonwealth Institute, she will be expected to immediately notify the clinical coordinator. Such a notification shall be oral and in writing.

The student shall have the option to remain in the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service program throughout the pregnancy period, but must take a leave of absence from all embalming clinical activities.

The student realizes that a delay in completing clinical requirements may delay the completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Funeral Service program.

## **PROCTORED EXAMINATIONS**

Some courses or elements of our curriculum require proctored examinations. All these tests are conducted locally on the Commonwealth Institute campus in Houston, TX.

Please contact [information@commonwealth.edu](mailto:information@commonwealth.edu) or phone at (281) 873-0262 to arrange a proctored examination. Examinations in the CIFS proctored facility are by appointment only. Appointments are on a first come, first served basis. At times testing facility space is at a premium; therefore CIFS requires 24 hour notice when cancelling an examination appointment. Failure to contact CIFS regarding a cancellation or repeat cancellations (even with 24 hour notice) will result in the loss of future scheduling privileges.

**If you live outside of 120 mile radius from Harris county, Texas, and cannot be present at CIFS for a proctored exam:**

You may be eligible to arrange to take your examination elsewhere under the supervision of a pre-approved proctor; that is, someone authorized by CIFS to conduct the test. Please call (281) 873-0262 to request the necessary forms to initiate the proctor approval process.

CIFS reserves the right to require a student to take a proctored examination onsite in Houston, TX.

## **PERSONAL HYGEINE**

Attention to personal hygiene is important and is particularly useful for students entering the field of funeral service. Strong odors, including excessive perfume/cologne and those resulting from a lack of personal hygiene are not acceptable.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY & CONDUCT**

Detailed information with regard to student conduct is supplied in the Student Handbook and at orientation. In general, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is socially acceptable and brings credit to themselves, the Institute and their chosen profession. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action or suspension in accordance with Institute policies.

Commonwealth Institute provides academic programs that are rigorous and challenging, consistent with other institutions of higher learning. Commonwealth Institute has established the following criteria to measure good standing, academic recognition, and satisfactory progress.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

As an individual who has selected the field of funeral service for a career, CIFS maintains the inherent belief that all students should exhibit the behavior consistent with that of individuals entering the professional field of funeral service. Expected demeanor must be represented in all forms of communication. This expectation is not just in the classroom setting, but also in interactions with CIFS staff and fellow students. The ethical standards by which you will be held include paramount beliefs in honesty and integrity...that which you would exhibit with the grieving families and trusting public you will serve. Additionally, you will be held to strict adherence of confidentiality. Your guiding principle should always be, "is this acceptable behavior for how I would treat families in the funeral home?"

Commonwealth Institute recognizes that students are both citizens and members of the academic community. Upon enrolling in the Institute, each student assumes an obligation to conduct himself/herself in a manner compatible with the Institute's function, missions and goals.

Students are expected to obey the penal and civil statues of local, state and federal government along with the Institute's policies, regulations, and administrative rules. For additional information on CIFS Student Behavior Policy, please see the Student Behavior Section of the Student Handbook.

## **STALKING**

Stalking is defined as repeated conduct directed at a specific person whether that person is a total stranger, acquaintance, current or former intimate partner, or anyone else that would cause a reasonable person to fear for her or his safety, for the safety of a third person, or to feel emotional distress. Such behavior is prohibited. Stalking behaviors include, but are not limited to repeatedly pursuing, following, waiting, or showing up uninvited to or near a residence, workplace, classroom, or other places frequented by the person, surveillance or other types of observation including staring or “peeping,” and repeated unwanted communication, including face-to-face communication, telephone calls, voice messages, e-mails, text messages, written letters, gifts, or any other communications that are unwelcome by the receiver.

## **POLICY AGAINST HARASSMENT & DISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of the Institute to maintain learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, sexual harassment, or age discrimination; therefore, the Institute prohibits any form of religious, racial, or sexual harassment and age discrimination.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, third party (present on the premises) or other Institute personnel to harass a student, teacher, administrator, or other Institute personnel through conduct, or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion, race, or age discrimination as defined by this policy. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, third party (present on the premises) or other Institute personnel to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial, or sexual harassment or age discrimination upon any student, teacher, administrator, or other college personnel.

The Institute will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial or sexual harassment, or age discrimination, and to discipline or take appropriate action, against any student, teacher, administrator, or other Institute personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

## **HEALTH**

Students are encouraged to carry proof of insurance to facilitate hospitalization in the event of an emergency. Health services are not provided by the Institute; however, students are encouraged to seek immunization assistance from the Texas Department of Health Services ([www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us)), Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services ([www.dshs.state.tx.us](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us)) or any local immunization clinic. Harris County Clinics in our area are as follows:

**Humble Health Clinic** - 1730 Humble Place Drive  
Phone: (281) 446-4222  
Hours: Monday: 7:30-11:00 a.m. & 1:00 -6:00 p.m.  
Tues.-Thurs: 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 8:00 – 11:00 AM

**Antoine Health Clinic** - 5815 Antoine, Suite A  
Phone: (713) 602-3300  
Hours: Mon.-Wed.-Thurs. & Fri.: 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Tues.: 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

We have available upon request an educational pamphlet on HIV and AIDS developed by the Texas Department of Health. The Institute recognizes the importance of meeting the guidelines set forth by OSHA and the Center for Diseases Control (CDC) with regard to Universal Precautions, and endeavors to comply with all regulations. These regulations are intended to keep individuals as safe as possible from infections resulting from the handling of remains. Therefore, all human remains shall be handled as if they were infectious cases, and Universal Precautions are to be practiced on all cases.

Students are advised to consult their personal physician concerning preventative vaccination and susceptibility testing. Ask your physician about the HBV vaccine to protect you against infection by the Hepatitis B virus. The vaccine is available for individuals who might come into direct contact with blood or body fluids. This vaccine, administered prior to exposure to the virus, consists of a series of three injections given over a six-month period. See recommendations at [www.commonwealth.edu](http://www.commonwealth.edu). Also please refer to the timeframe or sign a waiver for the HBV vaccination at the time of enrollment. See the student handbook for more information.

# Section 12 Academic Policies

## GRADING

The following grading system is used in determining the student's level of achievement. All courses carry a specific number of quarter hour credits. A quarter hour shall be considered as the equivalent of one course hour of lecture, or two hours of laboratory per week for an eleven-week period of instruction. A course hour consists of one fifty-minute period. Students receive grade points according to the following system:

Grade	Numerical Range	Point Value per Credit Hour
A	93-100	4.0
B	85-92	3.0
C	75-84	2.0
D	70-74	1.0
F	below 70	0.0
W	Withdrawn	
T	Transfer Credit	
P	Pass	
I	Incomplete	
AU	Audit	

The grade of Incomplete may be given at the discretion of the course instructor. This temporary designation indicates the student completed all but a minor portion of the required work in the course. The student must complete the work and have the Incomplete removed from his/her grade record within ten calendar days of the end of the quarter or the grade will be changed to "F".

## MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS

Students are expected to take all examinations as scheduled. Generally, make-up examinations for scheduled exams are not permitted. Refer to course syllabus for instructor's policy on make-up examinations.

## GRADE REPORTS

Students are provided a report of academic progress at midterm and upon completion of each quarter. An official transcript is issued to students upon graduation. Additional official transcripts are available with written request from the student, and payment of the required fee. A student with an outstanding financial obligation to the college, or in default in federal student aid programs, will have transcript(s) withheld until the debt is paid.

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

If a subject in which a student has received an incomplete grade has been discontinued or is no longer offered at the time when the student returns, the student would have the following options:

- 1) Full refund for tuition charged for the discontinued course.
- 2) The student would be offered at the same cost the course(s) from the current curriculum which most closely parallels the course content and credit hours(s) of the discontinued course.

To calculate the student's Grade Point Average (GPA), add the total number of Grade Points earned and divide by the total number of hours taken, excluding credit hours with a grade of W, T, P, or AU. When a course is repeated, the grade point average will be determined as if the course were taken only once. The higher of the grades earned will take precedence.

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service requires students to obtain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) to graduate. A student should be making satisfactory progress toward the completion of his/her program of study. The student must be proceeding through the program at a pace allowing for completion within the maximum time of 1 ½ times the normal program length. The following cumulative grade point average will be used to determine academic progress.

0-20 quarter hours	1.6 cumulative GPA
21-40 quarter hours	1.7 cumulative GPA
41-60 quarter hours	1.8 cumulative GPA
61-80 quarter hours	1.9 cumulative GPA
81-97 quarter hours	2.0 cumulative GPA

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

At the end of each quarter, student progress is evaluated. Academic probation is intended to warn a student that their performance is below the level of good standing. Students are placed on academic probation for the subsequent quarter by failing to maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average or by failing any course.

## **COURSE AUDIT POLICY**

If an individual wants to officially register for a class without earning a letter grade or credit, the course may be scheduled as an audit after all students registering for credit have been accommodated. The cost incurred is the same as if the course were taken for credit (exceptions may exist for past graduates of the Institute). Title IV Financial aid funds and V.A. benefits cannot be applied to audited courses.

- **Academic Requirements**  
Non-student auditors must adhere to Institute policies governing dress code, behavior, harassment and discrimination. Auditors may be required to participate fully in the class. Expectations should be clarified with the course instructor at the start of the quarter. Restrictions on admission to courses with educationally necessary prerequisites and with extensive laboratory or clinical activities may be imposed, with room always for reasonable exceptions. No person who is ineligible for readmission by reason of his/her having been dropped from the Institute for scholastic or other reasons shall be eligible to audit classes. Auditors are permitted to ask to participate in graded activities, such as homework, group projects, laboratories, and exams. The instructor is not required to grade any written assignments that may be submitted by an auditor.
- **Scheduling an Audit**  
A course may be dropped for credit and added for audit or dropped for audit and added for credit on permission of the instructor and Dean of Academics, and if all requirements for admission as a student are met. A non-student auditor may audit courses for a period not to exceed two academic quarters.
- **Impact of an Audit on the Student's Record and Enrollment Status**  
A course scheduled for audit will appear on the auditor's record with the symbol "AU" if attendance was regular or "W" if the attendance was unsatisfactory. Commonwealth Institute may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. Please consult the Dean of Academics for more detailed information.

## **REMEDY OF ACADEMIC PROBATION**

A student placed on probation for failing to maintain the 2.0 cumulative GPA or by failing any course may be allowed to progress to the next quarter of studies. Students who fail to achieve a cumulative 2.0 or higher GPA at the end of their second consecutive probationary quarter will have enrollment terminated. Students who have a failing grade in any course may be required to repeat the course in order to achieve a passing grade. Tuition is charged to repeat failed courses.

## **ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

Academic dismissal is incurred when it becomes unlikely that a student will achieve satisfactory academic progress. At the end of ANY given quarter, students with three or more “F” or “W” course grades in any combination, or who earn a GPA of 1.0 or less will be dismissed for academic reasons. Students on academic probation for two quarters who fail to raise their GPA to a 2.0 will be dismissed for academic reasons. Students dismissed for academic reasons may apply for readmission into the first quarter in which grades of less than “C” was earned and after one quarter has passed since their termination for academic reasons. After readmission, if the student fails to raise his/her grade point average to 2.0 within that quarter, he/she will be dismissed and is not eligible for readmission.

## **ACADEMIC RECOGNITION**

The Dean’s List is published each term to recognize full time students who have achieved a GPA at least 3.0 in that quarter and have received no failing grades. Degrees and Certificates will be awarded with Honors to graduating students having a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0. Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher will graduate with Honors and Distinction.

The recipient of the Chairman’s Award, the R.L. Waltrip Outstanding Achievement Award, is selected by the members of the graduating class whom they feel demonstrates the greatest professionalism and greatest promise for success.

## **COMMENCEMENT**

There are important differences between commencement and graduation with which you should be familiar. Commencement refers to the ceremony, officiated by the President of the Institute, where you share the excitement and importance of your academic accomplishments with peers, family, and friends. It is also a time for the Institute administrators and faculty to pay special tribute to you for the outstanding efforts you have shown.

Participating in a commencement ceremony does not certify graduation or confirm a degree. Students who are eligible to participate in commencement are those who complete their degree requirements (excluding, in many cases, the requirement to take the NBE) by the end of the current quarter. Commonwealth may consider other eligible students as those who lack no more than six credit hours to be completed next quarter and maintain a GPA of 2.5 or greater at the time of commencement.

Graduation is the certifying of degrees. Commonwealth certifies graduates of the associate of applied science program upon the completion of all requirements including completion of both sections of the NBE. Your degree becomes official when it is posted to your transcript and not by your participation in commencement exercises. In general the CIFS commencement ceremony is approximately one hour. There is no limit for the number of guests a student may invite, and there are no tickets issued. Seating is on a first-come-first-serve basis at the ceremony.

## **THE FOLLOWING RECOGNITIONS OCCUR DURING THE COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**

### *ROBERT L. WALTRIP CHAIRMAN’S AWARD*

This award is named in honor of the founder and Chairman of Service Corporation International and the Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service. This award is presented to the graduate whom the class feels demonstrates the greatest professionalism and greatest promise in funeral service.

### *DR. GEORGE H. POSTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP*

The scholarship is awarded to the student who has exhibited the highest proficiency in the courses of Embalming and Restorative Art.

### *HONORS GRADUATE AWARDS*

1. Students are recognized with Honors for maintaining a 3.0-3.49 Cumulative Grade Point Average.
2. Students are recognized with Honors and Distinction for maintaining a 3.5 or higher Cumulative GPA.

# Section 13 National Board Examination

## **LICENSE EXAMINATIONS**

It is the student's responsibility to complete the application for the \*National Board Examination, Texas State Board Examination, Texas State Law Examination, and any other licensure related exams along with the correct fee and within the necessary time frame. Additional information can be found at [www.theconferenceonline.org](http://www.theconferenceonline.org) for National Board information and at [www.tfsc.state.tx.us](http://www.tfsc.state.tx.us) for questions about the Texas State Law Examination.

## **NATIONAL BOARD/LICENSURE**

At present, the computer-based National Board Examination consists of two three-hour sessions on embalming sciences and funeral directing arts consisting of 170 questions each.

Students completing the Certificate in Funeral Directing and planning to seek licensure in Texas must take the Texas State Board Examination.

Students completing the Associate of Applied Science Degree curriculum  
**MUST TAKE THE NATIONAL BOARD EXAMINATION AS A REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION – NO EXCEPTIONS.**

The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards of the United States administers the National Board Examination and Texas State Board Examination at computer testing sites throughout the year. Students must be certified by the Institute to be able to take the National Board Examination or Texas State Board Examination. Please see the conference website for testing locations.

*\*It is the students' responsibility to check with the state in which they are seeking licensure.*

## **NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION**

A student who desires to sit for the National Board Examination (NBE) or State Board Examination (SBE) administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB) must first be certified by the Institute to the ICFSEB (as a reminder, taking the NBE is a requirement for graduation from the associate of applied science degree program). The ICFSEB does not allow certification for only one section of NBE. A student must pass both sections of the Institute's certification examination with a score of 80 or higher on each section (arts and sciences) in order to be certified to sit for the NBE or SBE. A student who successfully meets the requirements must request to be certified to the ICFSEB. Students who do not request certification to the ICFSEB within 30 days from successfully passing both sections (and one section for some SBEs) of the certification examination must retake both sections of the certification examination with a score of at least 80 on each section (arts and sciences). CIFS officials will only certify an eligible student to the ICFSEB who has provided a specific timeframe for taking the NBE within 30 days of requesting certification.

The certification examination is an assessment developed and administered by the Institute which is similar in length and format to the NBE. The certification examination may be computer-based or written. It is up to the discretion of the Institute as to how the examination is administered and by which format. In every instance, students should prepare to take the certification examination by studying as they would to take the actual NBE or SBE. A student should never take the certification examination without proper and complete preparation. Students who must retake (due to a score below 80) any section of the certification examination must wait a minimum of 15 days in order to utilize proper time to study. Students who score below 65 on any section must wait a minimum of 30 days to retake that section.

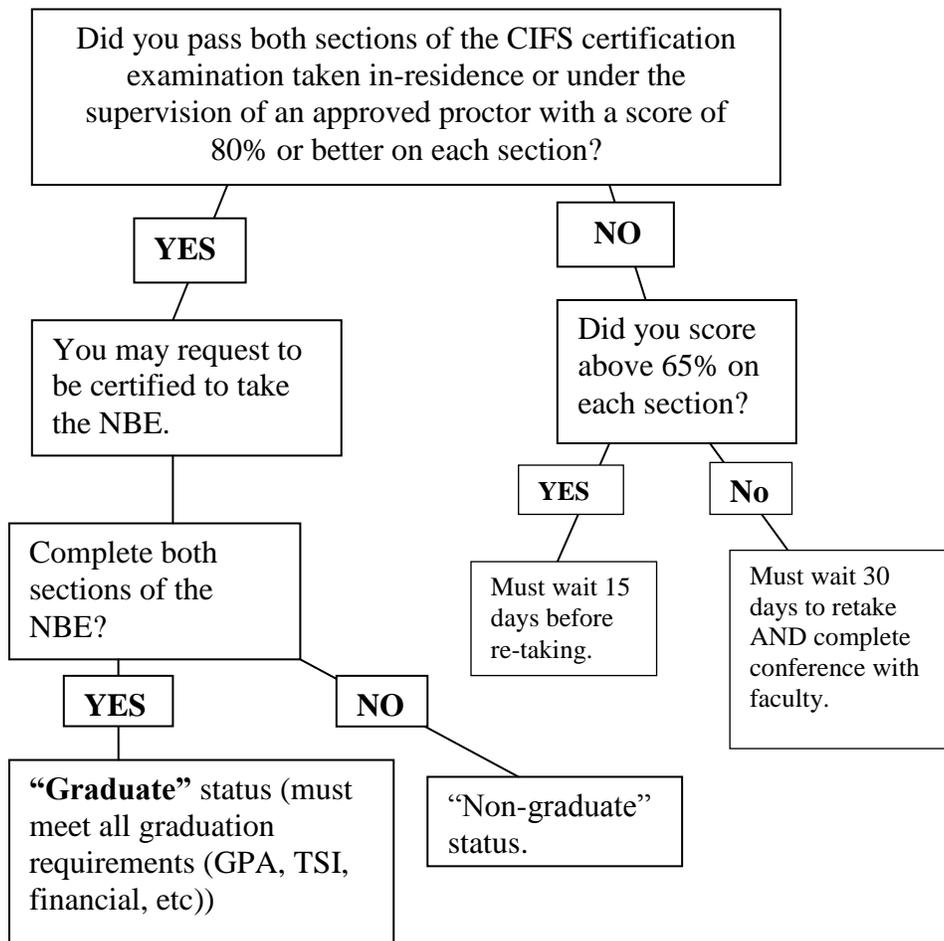
Additionally, the student will need to have a conference with CIFS faculty to develop a study plan to improve scores.

Students preparing for NBE certification do not need to take both sections (arts and sciences) on the same day, however results which demonstrate a passing score of 80 for each section must be completed within 30 days of each other in order to be considered eligible for certification. Scores attained on examination sub-sections from previous attempts may not be combined to achieve an overall passing score of 80 on any section.

The CIFS certification examination is a high stakes examination. Under all circumstances, the certification examination must be taken at an approved proctor site (see guidelines). Additionally, students who live within a 120 mile radius from Harris county Texas must take the certification exam on-campus at CIFS. Students taking the exam at CIFS must contact the office to make arrangements. Availability is based on a first come, first served basis. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the student to plan ahead. Students will not be accommodated due to poor planning.

Examination security is paramount and taken very seriously. The CIFS policy on academic dishonesty applies to those taking the certification examination. Additionally, students will be required to sign the examination security document prior to being allowed to sit for the certification examination. Any student who declines to sign the form will not be allowed to sit for the examination. Academic dishonesty during certification examination will make you ineligible to be certified for NBE or SBE.

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION STRUCTURE



## REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION SUMMARY

- Passing grade for each course and achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all coursework completed at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service;
- Discharge of all financial obligations to the Institute 30 days prior to commencement;
- Students graduating from the AAS degree program must complete the following additional requirements:
- Completion of required arterial and cavity embalming of ten (10) human remains and restorative art laboratory;
- Completion of both sections of NBE; and
- Must satisfy all requirements of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI).
- For those receiving federal student loans, complete financial aid exit counseling.

# Section 14 Financial Policies

All tuition and fees are subject to change by the Board of Regents to become effective as announced and will apply to students already enrolled unless otherwise specified. Official registration in any program includes, as a condition, the payment of all fees and charges. See the current Schedule of Tuition and Fees for all charges. Student will not be eligible to take quarter finals if they have any outstanding balance.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

A full refund will be made to any student who cancels the enrollment contract within 72 hours (until midnight of the third day excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) after the enrollment contract is signed. A full refund will also be made to any student who cancels enrollment within the student's first three scheduled class days, except that the school may retain not more than \$100 in any administrative fees charged, as well as items of extra expense that are necessary for the portion of the program attended and stated separately on the enrollment agreement.

## **REFUND POLICY FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE AND CERTIFICATE IN FUNERAL DIRECTING- IN SESSION or ONLINE**

1. Refund computations will be based on scheduled course time of class attendance through the last date of attendance. Leaves of absence, suspensions and school holidays will not be counted as part of the scheduled class attendance.
2. The effective date of termination for refund purposes will be the earliest of the following:
  - (a) The last day of attendance, if the student is terminated by the school;
  - (b) The date of receipt of written notice from the student; or
  - (c) Ten school days following the last date of attendance.
3. If tuition and fees are collected in advance of entrance, and if after expiration of the 72 hour cancellation privilege the student does not enter school, not more than \$100 in any administrative fees charged shall be retained by the school for the entire residence program or synchronous distance education course.
4. If a student enters a residence or synchronous distance education program and withdraws or is otherwise terminated after the cancellation period, the school or college may retain not more than \$100 in any administrative fees charged for the entire program. The minimum refund of the remaining tuition and fees will be the pro rata portion of tuition, fees, and other charges that the number of hours remaining in the portion of the course or program for which the student has been charged after the effective date of termination bears to the total number of hours in the portion of the course or program for which the student has been charged, except that a student may not collect a refund if the student has completed 75 percent or more of the total number of hours in the portion of the program for which the student has been charged on the effective date of termination.<sup>1</sup>
5. Refunds for items of extra expense to the student, such as books, tools, or other supplies are to be handled separately from refund of tuition and other academic fees. The student will not be required to purchase instructional supplies, books and tools until such time as these materials are required. Once

these materials are purchased, no refund will be made. For full refunds, the school can withhold costs for these types of items from the refund as long as they were necessary for the portion of the program attended and separately stated in the enrollment agreement. Any such items not required for the portion of the program attended must be included in the refund.

6. A student who withdraws for a reason unrelated to the student's academic status after the 75 percent completion mark and requests a grade at the time of withdrawal shall be given a grade of "incomplete" and permitted to re-enroll in the course or program during the 12-month period following the date the student withdrew without payment of additional tuition for that portion of the course or program.
7. A full refund of all tuition and fees is due and refundable in each of the following cases:
  - (a) An enrollee is not accepted by the school;
  - (b) If the course of instruction is discontinued by the school and this prevents the student from completing the course; or
  - (c) If the student's enrollment was procured as a result of any misrepresentation in advertising, promotional materials of the school, or representations by the owner or representatives of the school.

*A full or partial refund may also be due in other circumstances of program deficiencies or violations of requirements for career schools and colleges.*

#### **REFUND POLICY FOR STUDENTS CALLED TO ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE (TEC 132.0611)**

A student of Commonwealth who withdraws as a result of the student being called to active duty in a military service of the United States or the Texas National Guard may elect one of the following options for each program in which the student is enrolled:

- 1) If tuition and fees are collected in advance of the withdrawal, a pro rata refund of any tuition, fees, or other charges paid by the student for the program and a cancellation of any unpaid tuition, fees, or other charges owed by the student for the portion of the program the student does not complete following withdrawal;
- 2) A grade of incomplete with the designation "withdrawn-military" for the courses in the program, other than courses for which the student has previously received a grade on the student's transcript, and the right to re-enroll in the program, or a substantially equivalent program if that program is no longer available, not later the first anniversary of the date the student is discharged from active military duty without payment of additional tuition, fees, or other charges for the program other than any previously unpaid balance of the original tuition, fees, and charges for books for the program; or
- 3) The assignment of an appropriate final grade or credit for the courses in the program, but only if the instructor or instructors of the program determine that the student has: (a) satisfactorily completed at least 90 percent of the required coursework for the program; and (b) demonstrated sufficient mastery of the program material to receive credit for completing the program.

**Approved and Regulated by the Texas Workforce Commission,  
Career Schools & Colleges, Austin, Texas.**

**The information contained in this catalog is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

Dr. J. Chandler Altieri  
President/CEO

## **THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FUNERAL HISTORY**

Another asset that Commonwealth Institute has, to which no other mortuary college in the world can attest, is the National Museum of Funeral History. Students learn funeral service through interaction with the Museum's exhibits, which truly make the heritage of this great profession come alive.

The Museum teaches history, sociology, ethics, religions, lifestyles and a myriad of other lessons with a push of a button. Here students at Commonwealth will experience sights and sounds of funeral history along with obtaining information that they never can receive anywhere else.

The National Museum of Funeral History is a jewel in the crown of the Commonwealth Institute. Couple this rich educational resource with excellent instruction and genuine love of funeral service, any student will be hard pressed to locate a better combination!