

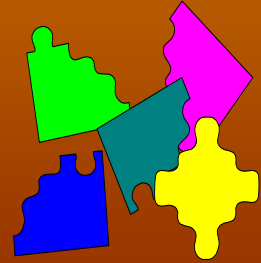
## The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc.

### An Orientation to ICFSEB

Presented by: Billie Watson Hughes, CFSP District 2 Director

### Today's informational Goals

- Conference Mandate
- History and organization of the Conference
- Relationship to educators and practitioners
- Examinations
- Statistics
- Other services



## Who is the Conference?

An organization made up of funeral service licensing boards and regulatory agencies, currently

- 50 states
- the District of Columbia
- Canadian Provinces (Alberta, Manitoba & Ontario)
- 57 Mortuary Science Programs (Associate Members)

### The International Conference

**OUR MISSION:** The International Conference is a not-for-profit voluntary association providing examination services, information, and regulatory support to funeral service licensing boards and educators, legislators and other regulatory agencies, and the public at large in various states, districts, provinces, jurisdictions, and internationally.

## Founding purpose

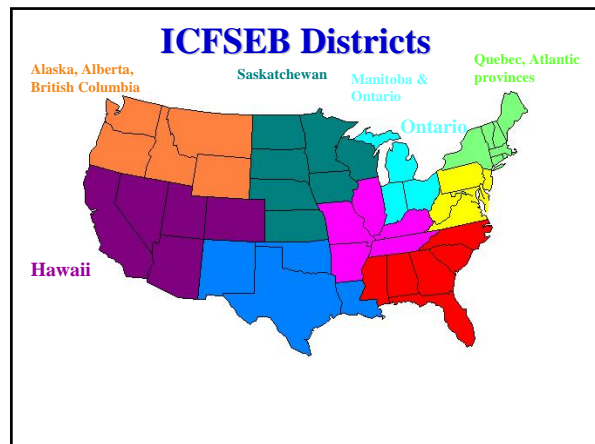
- "The intent of this organization is: to consider questions of common interest to the Embalmers' Examining Boards, to recommend educational standards, and, so far as possible, to secure uniformity in the rules and regulations governing said boards in the examination and requirement of applicants." J. H. McCully

## How operated?

- Non profit corporation
- Board of Directors - 10 members
- U.S and Canada divided into 9 districts for full representation

## How operated?

- ABFSE Representative
- Full time administrative staff
- Professional testing services provided by Pearson VUE of Minnesota.



## Where is The Conference?



## History

- Funeral service effort to systematize and classify the procedures which would lead to licensure
- 1900 meeting in Denver, Colorado -Dr. Tyler elected President & J. H. McCully elected Secretary



## History

- Unfortunate death of Dr. Tyler delayed next meeting to 1904 - J. H. McCully elected president of the Conference of Undertakers and Embalmers Examining Board of North America
- Later we became the Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards and in 1997 added "International" to be more inclusive of our membership and allow us to grow

In 1916 work began on development of a national exam based upon a request from the National Funeral Directors.

During the ensuing years, questions regarding the standards of mortuary schools became an issue.

The Conference, the National Funeral Directors Association, and National Selected Morticians set the minimum requirements at nine months.

This mandate took effect in 1934.

# ICFSEB Orientation An Orientation to ICFSEB

The Conference, National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA), and the National Association of Embalming schools and Colleges established the National Mortuary Education Council which was responsible for establishing a standard accreditation system.

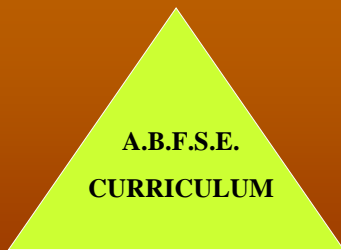
This responsibility was passed from the Conference to the Joint Committee on Mortuary Education in 1958. Today we know this group as the American Board of Funeral Service Education.

## ABFSE

**The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) serves as the national academic accreditation agency for college and university programs in Funeral Service and Mortuary Science Education. ABFSE is the sole accrediting agency recognized by the US Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation in this field.**

**Michael Smith, Executive Director**  
Offices are located in St. Joseph, MO

## PRACTITIONERS



**MORTUARY PROGRAMS**

**REGULATORY BOARDS & AGENCIES**

## Conference Programs

- Annual Meeting of the Jurisdictions
- Item Writing Workshops (Exam Questions)
- Provide various publications for member Boards
- Financial Support for ABFSE
- Reciprocity for NBE results
- Scholarships for Students
- Represent Regulatory Agencies at various levels

## Programs (continued)

- Study Guide for NBE Preparation
- License Certifications to States
- Educational Programs for State Boards
- Conduct Studies of Interest to Funeral Service
- Advise Regulatory Boards
- Custom Examination Services for Members

## Examinations - What we do best!

- Types of Exams
- Overview of Measurement



## CONFERENCE EXAMINATIONS

- National Board Examinations (NBE)
- State Board Examinations (SBE)
- Laws, Rules & Regulations Examinations (LRR)



## The NBE (National Board Exam)

Science Section (Embalming)    Arts Section (Funeral Directing)

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Embalming – 42 items       | Sociology – 18 items         |
| Restorative Art – 42 items | Psychology – 21 items        |
| Microbiology – 15 items    | Funeral Directing – 27 items |
| Pathology – 24 items       | Business Law- 18 items       |
| Chemistry – 12 items       | F. S. Law – 24 items         |
| Anatomy - 15 items         | Merchandising - 18 items     |
|                            | Accounting - 24 items        |

## Types of Questions on the NBE (All multiple choice questions)

- One Best Response - (two types)
  - Direction Questions
  - Incomplete Statements
- Complex Multiple Choice
- Situational Sets

## Example: One Best Response Direct Question

What is the PRIMARY function of word processing software?

- A. producing written documents
- B. producing graphic presentations
- C. listing, calculating, and sorting data
- D. sorting information in a data file cabinet

## Example: Complex Multiple Choice

A **typical** 6-year old child whose parents have died may

- I. accept that death is final and inevitable.
- II. have no comprehension of death.
- III. fail to adequately mourn.
- IV. try to personify death.

- A. I and II only
- B. I and IV only
- C. II and IV only
- D. III and IV only

## Example: Situational Sets

Eva Goldberg is making the funeral arrangements for her husband who died at home and was a veteran. Also present at the conference are her son John, age 31; son Levi, age 24; daughter Marium, age 33; Sol Cohen, a Reform Jewish Rabbi; and Jack Smith, a wartime buddy and best friend of her husband.

1. Which of the following caskets would the practitioner expect the family to purchase?

- A. An Aron
- B. An orthodox (traditional) oak
- C. A 20-gauge steel, nonprotective
- D. A casket of the family's choice

2. Mrs. Goldberg has stated that she personally does not want to receive the VA flag. According to Veterans Affairs policy, who would be the most eligible to receive the flag?

- A. John
- B. Levi
- C. Jack
- D. Marium

## Validity of the NBE

- Possesses substantial content validity
- Designed to test those areas of knowledge needed by the entry level practitioner to enter this profession
- Is highly representative of the knowledge domain it intends to measure
- Meets all standards set forth in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*

## Reliability of the NBE

- Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures.
- It is measured by a statistic known as the KR20 which is a scale from .00 (not reliable) to 1.0 (perfect reliability)
- The KR20 of the NBE is typically .90 for both the Arts and the Sciences, which is evidence of strong reliability.
- The decision consistency reliability is typically .92 for both the Arts and the Sciences exams, which is further evidence of a highly reliable examination.

## Overview of Measurement

- 1. Job Analysis
- 2. Content Outline
- 3. Item Writing
- 4. Expert Review
- 5. Standard Setting
- 6. Examination Development
- 7. Examination Review
- 8. Administration
- 9. Scoring
- 10. Statistical Analysis
- 11. Reporting

## Example: One Best Response Incomplete Statements

Low index fluids used to inhibit bilirubin from converting to biliverdin are known as

- A. humectants.
- B. jaundice fluids.
- C. coinjection fluids.
- D. preinjection fluids.

## 1. Job Analysis

5,000 practitioners were surveyed in 2004 to:

- I. Describe the job of the Funeral Service Practitioner in sufficient detail as to provide a basis for the development of a job-related licensure examination.
- II. Identify the core activities that are important to the practice of the Funeral Service Practitioner at the time of licensure.

The Job Analysis was originally done in 1994 and updated in 1999 & 2004.

## 2. Content Outline

- I. This document outlines what areas (activities) are to be assessed.
- II. Outlines the cognitive (difficulty) level at which questions should be written
- III. Provides for their representation (weight) on the examination.

To sum up, the content outline is directly related to the activities that practitioners perform, while also providing the examination specifications which serves as the “blueprint” of the NBE.

## Content Outline

Contains 265 professional tasks statements required of Funeral Service Practitioners

Sample from Embalming – 49 task statements

1. Determine type of transfer equipment needed.
2. Follow transfer protocol of jurisdictional authority or institution.
3. Assess signs of death.
4. Perform arterial embalming (injecting fluid into vascular system.)

## 3. Item Writing

The ICFSEB periodically conducts item writing workshops where educators, regulators, and practitioners write the items which will eventually appear on the National Board Exam.

### Contributor by Profession

Regulators	19%
Practitioners	19%
Educators	56%
Field Professionals	6%



## 4. Expert Review

- I. Items are first reviewed by Pearson VUE to make sure they are psychometrically sound and grammatically correct.
- II. Items are then referred to the National Board Exam Committee (18 members) who make sure the item is:
  - a. correctly written and professionally accurate
  - b. linked to one of the task statements from the content outline
  - c. linked to the ABFSE curriculum
  - d. properly referenced to a professional source

## 5. Standard Setting

- I. Standard setting (e.g., pre-equating) allows us to provide an exam that is consistent in difficulty for all applicants.
- II. The passing score is a 75 on both the arts section and science section. In order to pass the National Board Examination, a candidate must obtain a 75 or higher on both sections.

## 6. Examination Development

Three different exams are made each year:



The exam is developed about 4 months before it is given by the professional staff at Pearson VUE from our item bank with each exam complying with the required complexity levels and other examination specifications.

## 7. Examination Review

Members of the exam committee review items as needed for inclusion on future forms of the NBE.



No exam is released for administration until it has been approved by the exam committee.

## 8. Exam Administration

- The NBE is administered at Pearson VUE professional testing centers located throughout the United States and internationally.
- Candidates can schedule exams at their convenience Monday through Saturday.

## 9. Scoring & Statistical Reporting

- Exams are scored by computer at the test site and candidates are given a preliminary score report within minutes of completing the exam.
- The results are uploaded into Pearson VUE's system where quality checks and final analysis is performed.
- Descriptive statistics are calculated and available to ICFSEB staff within 48 hours.

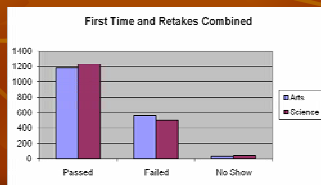
## 10. Score Reporting

- Scores are sent to the ICFSEB office daily.
- Once permanent records are established, the scores are reported to the state of the candidate's choosing via U.S. mail.
- Schools are notified each week of the candidates' scores from the previous week in the form of an e-mail roster.

## 2009 National Board Exam Statistics

First Time Examinees	Number Taking Exam	Number Passing (%)	Number Failing (%)	No Show (%)
Arts	1386	1044 (75%)	326 (24%)	16 (1%)
Sciences	1381	1099 (80%)	262 (19%)	20 (1%)

Retaking Exam	Number Taking Exam	Number Passing (%)	Number Failing (%)	No Show (%)
Arts	379	131 (35%)	232 (61%)	16 (4%)
Sciences	385	130 (34%)	238 (62%)	17 (4%)



## Top 5 Most Used Test Centers

#	Test Center Locations	Exams Delivered
1	Nashville, TN	118
2	St Louis, MO	116
3	Cincinnati, OH	99
4	Dallas, TX	90
5	Chicago IL	85

## QUESTIONS?



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