

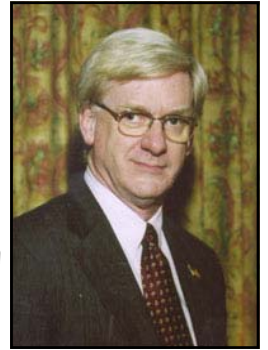
The Conference Report

Volume 14, Issue 2

2nd Trimester 2003

The International Conference of
Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc.
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From the President



Another year is half over and before any of us know it we will be in Saint Louis celebrating our 100th Anniversary, 100 years of working toward the goal of a better qualified entry level member of our profession. We will also be handing off the responsibility of this office to another team for their guidance and tutelage. We are in both exciting and challenging times, knowing that a year is so very brief a time, we continue the work begun in April and many years ago with energy and commitment with full knowledge that we can only make minor adjustments to the course of this great organization. During the NFDA Convention held last week in Las Vegas, this President, assisted by Secretary/Treasurer Runsvold and Past President Benke, rolled out the first QA Session dealing with (CBT) Computer Based Testing. Thanks also to Robb Smith, ABFSE Representative for the fine presentation he made at this meeting. This was done at the Executive Committee of the American Board. This subject has been discussed for quite some time and your Board at the fall Board Meeting in Scottsdale, AZ voted to make it a reality effective January 2004. This coincidentally is the same year in which The American Board requires that all students in the fifty two schools under their accreditation must take the NBE to graduate. There have been and are legitimate concerns regarding the implementation of CBT, there have been questions as to the logistics of when and how the candidates can all take the NBE in a timely manner. Webster defines "Trepidation", as a state of apprehension, of which there was a minimal amount in the beginning of the meeting voiced by a few of the participants. Following a lengthy discussion with extensive questions and answers by all, assisted by AMP in conference call format, the subject of CBT was accepted as a reality. Sometimes change at any level creates legitimate concern, certainly change of this magnitude has had its challenges. But we are confident that the time has come for this change and with the assistance of all of the members of the Board, by visiting the local Mortuary Science Schools and Programs, that this process will be virtually seamless. Your Executive Director has created a document dealing with the "How and Where" of this very important tool and its implementation throughout the United States. This office will be in touch with each Board member regarding their participation in this project.

Perhaps the following parable says it best. Many year ago while in mortal fear of chemistry in Mortuary School, one of the first things I read in the chemistry book was the following, I paraphrase: Cholera met a friend on the road to Baghdad, and when asked where he was going and what he was going to do, responded, "I'm going to Baghdad to kill 10,000 people." When asked how? He responded, "I'll only kill 1,000, fear will kill the rest!" Taking this to heart, I aced the chemistry course that I was convinced would sink me. Step out of your comfort level, challenge yourselves every day and surprise yourselves every day at what you can accomplish. CBT is here to stay and does indeed present a great opportunity to improve our profession both now and into the future.

Sincerely,
John J. Kazlauskas Sr., CFSP

From the Executive Director Dalene Paull



The past few months have seen monumental change for both The Conference and for funeral service. The implementation of computer based testing in January of 2004 will be a milestone for both the organization and the profession. Although some regard the move from paper/pencil to computer based testing with apprehension, all agree that we want the best possible method of delivery for this exam to ensure the integrity of both the exam itself and the results.

With the conversion a little over two months away, many questions remain as to how the new system will work. Three new forms will be produced in the first five months of 2004 with release dates on January 1st, March 1st, and May 1st. Candidates who sit for the exam in January will be required to wait until March to retest, those who test in March will be required to wait until May to retest unless they haven't taken the January form. The idea being that no candidate will sit for the exact same form twice in a row. Once all three forms are on the network, candidates will be required to wait a period of 4 weeks between each exam as to allow sufficient time for study. The fee for the exam will be \$350 for both sections or \$200 for each section if taken separately. Both sections of the NBE will consist of 150 core items and will also include 20 pretest items. Candidates will see 170 items but will not know which 20 do not actually count toward their final score. This pretest method is used to evaluate potential questions prior to their placement on a subsequent exam form.

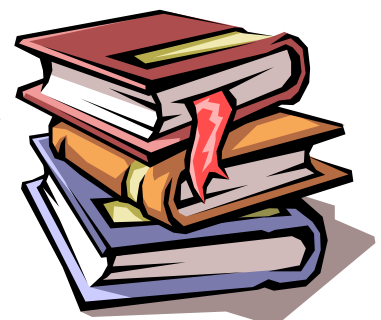
One of the biggest things to keep in mind with this conversion is that the Arts and Science sections of the NBE will be considered separate exams. There will no longer be a combined score for the NBE. For instance, in order to pass either section, the candidate will need to achieve a minimum score of 75 and in order to pass the NBE they will need to achieve a minimum score of 75 on both exams. Candidates will have to register for a time to sit for the Arts section and Science section separately. With proper scheduling and lead time, candidates can sit for both sections on the same day if they so choose but can also opt for two different days without penalty.

Candidates will receive their scores immediately following their exam. These scores will be conditional until properly certified by The Conference at which time the scores will be sent to the school of graduation on record and the state office requested by the candidate. The application process will be much the same as it is now in that candidates will apply and send fees to The Conference office. Once the school verifies the eligibility of each candidate through a list sent to my office, we will forward the list of eligible candidates to Applied Measurement Professionals. The candidates will then need to call AMP at 1-888-519-9901 or visit www.goamp.com to schedule their exam date and location. This system will provide a mechanism that allows only candidates who have been deemed eligible by their school and have paid their fees to register with AMP for an exam appointment.

Although a more comprehensive overview of CBT will be available shortly, hopefully some of the most frequently asked questions have been addressed. Please check our website, www.cfseb.org for more information or call my office at any time with questions or concerns. My staff and I look forward to working with both the schools and state boards to make this transition as seamless as possible.

NBE Passing Requirements Change 2004

During the 99th Annual Convention of The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards, Inc. the Board of Directors approved a change in the scoring procedures for the National Board Examination. In January 2004 it will be necessary for the candidates to obtain a minimum scaled score of 75 on both the Arts and Sciences sections of the NBE, in order to successfully pass the NBE. The current rule allows candidates to receive passing status if their combined score on both sections averages a minimum of a 75 with a minimum scaled score of 70 on the Arts and Science sections. This new rule will take effect for all candidates sitting for the NBE after January 1, 2004 and will present a more uniform code of scoring for the NBE as has been recommended by our psychometrician.



Important Reminder: Minimum Score required to pass the NBE is CHANGING, effective January 1, 2004.

The National Board Examination (NBE) Performance Data 2nd Trimester Results (May 2003-August 2003)

* All scores (except KR20) are reported as scaled scores.
KR20 adjusted for 150-item test using the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula.

<i>ARTS N=694</i>	<i>ARTS TOTAL</i>	<i>SOCIO/ FSH</i>	<i>PSYCH</i>	<i>FUNER DIR</i>	<i>BUS LAW</i>	<i>FUNER SER LAW</i>	<i>FUNER SER MER</i>	<i>ACCT/ COMP</i>
No. of Items	150	21	21	27	24	21	21	15
Mean	79.41	79.45	87.36	77.68	73.22	81.30	79.29	78.46
Median	80.03	79.84	89.85	79.08	73.40	84.47	80.43	77.30
Stand. Dev.	7.96	9.87	8.38	10.28	9.00	11.24	12.35	11.53
Stand. Error of Meas.	2.39	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Minimum	56.53	43.17	53.18	40.08	46.78	41.52	37.48	41.03
Maximum	97.53	99.84	99.85	100.00	97.07	100.00	99.95	99.96
KR20	.91	.61	.61	.60	.55	.61	.68	**
KR20*	NA	.92	.92	.89	.88	.92	.94	**

<i>SCIENCES N=749</i>	<i>SCIENCES TOTAL</i>	<i>EMBAL</i>	<i>REST ART</i>	<i>MICRO</i>	<i>PATH</i>	<i>CHEM</i>	<i>ANAT</i>	<i>ARTS & SCIENCES N=629</i>
No. of Items	150	36	36	18	24	18	18	300
Mean	76.53	75.51	78.35	77.11	73.15	79.27	76.23	79.00
Median	77.51	76.38	80.00	75.10	73.86	80.38	79.22	80.00
Stand. Dev.	8.94	10.44	9.34	12.08	12.54	10.52	11.46	7.90
Stand. Error of Meas.	2.68	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Minimum	51.70	40.96	48.89	45.94	41.36	45.38	41.72	55.00
Maximum	95.41	99.99	97.78	100.00	99.86	99.83	100.00	95.50
KR20	.91	.71	.69	**	.69	**	**	NA
KR20*	NA	.91	.90	**	.93	**	**	NA

<i>EXAMINEE STATUS</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>PASS</i>	<i>FAIL</i>
<i>FIRST-TIME</i>			
Arts*	586	80.55% (472)	19.45% (114)
Sciences	561	74.51% (418)	25.49% (143)
Arts & Sciences	557	78.99% (440)	21.01% (117)
<i>RETAKE</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>PASS</i>	<i>FAIL</i>
Arts*	107	17.76% (19)	82.24% (88)
Sciences	188	17.55% (33)	82.45% (155)
Arts & Sciences	72	12.50% (9)	87.50% (63)
<i>FIRST-TIME and RETAKE COMBINED</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>PASS</i>	<i>FAIL</i>
Arts	694	70.75% (491)	29.25% (203)
Sciences	749	60.21% (451)	39.79% (298)
Arts & Sciences	629	71.38% (449)	28.62% (180)



ICFSEB Jurisdictional News

Districts 1 and 2 held a bi-district meeting on September 15, 2003 in Atlantic City, NJ during the annual conference of the NJ State Funeral Director's Association. There were thirteen attendees present. President John J. Kazlauskas informed the group of discussions he recently held with representatives of foreign countries with respect to examination of their candidates, as well as his experiences visiting examination sites, and attending the FARB and FAMIC conferences. Mr. Paul C. Brush reported on the CLEAR conference, he attended September 11-13, 2003 in Toronto. Robb Smith, Funeral Service Programs Director at Mercer County Community College and ABFSE Representative and Bernie Laskowski, Mortuary Science Program Director at Briarwood College, reported on their experiences in the discussion of diversity and equivalent competency at their respective schools. In addition, Mr. Smith explained his role on the ICFSEB Board of Directors as the representative of the American Board of Funeral Service Education and asked the NJSBMS members to again consider contracting their jurisprudence examination with the ICFSEB. President Kazlauskas and Mr. Brush discussed computer based testing (CBT) and the implementation process set to commence in 2004. A lively discussion of various regulatory issues followed among all members present. The attendees agreed that another bi-district meeting should be scheduled prior to the 100th Annual Convention in St. Louis, MO.

District 7 held a district meeting on September 5, 2003 in Santa Fe, NM. There were thirteen members present. Mr. Louis A. Muhleisen, Jr. provided the participants with a draft copy of the new strategic plan for The Conference and information regarding computer based testing (CBT), that included an overview of the pros and cons and concerns associated with CBT. Mr. Bill Hogan of AMP was available via conference call to address any questions the attendees had regarding CBT. Mr. Muhleisen also provided a review of The Conference budget. Representatives from Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma gave an overview of their respective State Boards and School operations. The attendees also participated in discussions of issues of interest to the State Boards and Schools including such topics as state regulations over cemeteries, attraction and retention of licensees to respective states, Continuing Education requirements, and pre-need legislation.



From left to right - Foster Guillory, Frank Solis, Tommy LaGrone, Geraldine Mascarenas, Rev. Clyde Stanfield, Nancy Barber, Jim Shoemaker, Alicia Duran, Chet Robbins, Laura Romero, Louis Muhleisen, Sam Baca, Rodney May

2004 100th Annual ICFSEB Convention

"100 Years of Regulatory Excellence"

April 23-25, 2004

St. Louis Downtown Marriott, One Broadway, St. Louis, MO (314) 421-1776

Registration Fee \$235.00

(includes lunch tickets, reception tickets, and awards banquet ticket for one person)

Each Additional Person from your State Board will receive a discounted

Registration Fee of \$200.00

(includes lunch tickets, reception tickets, and awards banquet tickets for one person)

Registration Materials and the Convention Agenda

will be made available as soon as possible.

Hope to see you in St. Louis !