



# ABFSE

AMERICAN BOARD OF  
FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

Confidential Report

Prepared for

ABFSE/Committee on Accreditation

&

Institution: St. Petersburg College

Following

*Site Visit*

Date: September 26, 2022

Prepared by

Dr. David Edds  
Team Chair

Mr. B. Steven Spann  
Funeral Service Educator

Mr. Patrick Konieczny  
Professional

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# **ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE**

## **PREFACE**

A team of three (3) people visited St. Petersburg College (SPC) in Pinellas Park, Florida on September 26, 2022 for the purpose of reaccreditation for the Funeral Service Program by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). The visit was conducted on-site.

Members of the Site Visit Team were:

- Dr. David Edds, Team Chair
- Mr. Steven Spann, Funeral Service Educator
- Mr. Patrick Konieczny, Funeral Service Professional.

A number of communications, either via telephone, email or text messages between the Team chair and program director took place in planning for the visit. Scheduling, accommodations for the Team and other visit related issues were addressed in the communications.

The following staff members of Saint Petersburg College were interviewed during the visit:

- Kevin Davis, Program Chair
- Gary Brown, Faculty member
- Mary Rutan, Faculty member
- Dr. Reanna Stentiford, Dean of Allied Health Sciences
- Maggie Tymns, Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- Maria Drew, Assistant Director of Admissions
- Dawn Janusz, Student Support Manager
- Dr. Matthew Liao-Troth, Vice-President of Academic Affairs
- Dr. Hector Lora, Associate Vice-President for Budgeting
- Joshua Brown, Associate Director for Learning Resources
- Dr. Lisa Leonard, Instructional Support Manager

The Site Visit Team met with three (3) students and seven (7) members of the Advisory Board. The exit conference was held on Monday, September 26, 2022. The exit conference was attended by three (3) members of the SPC faculty, the Site Visit Team and Dean, Dr. Deanna Stentiford.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 1992 the Florida Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers contacted St Petersburg Junior College about developing a mortuary college for the west coast of Florida. A needs assessment survey determined support for the new program serving the west coast and central Florida region.

In 1993 the Funeral Services Program was awarded initial candidacy. In the spring of 1994, the program received initial accreditation for seven (7) years. In 2001 the Funeral Services Program started offering on-line classes for the major. Because on-line classes cannibalized face to face

courses, the Program could not support both delivery options. Thus, the program became fully on-line in 2005.

St. Petersburg College was last accredited by the ABFSE in 2015 for a full seven (7) year period. There were two (2) concerns submitted to the Committee on Accreditation (COA). Those concerns were related to student input into the funeral services program and the absence of budgetary information in the previous Self-study. Those concerns were addressed in the previous accreditation cycle.

The Funeral Services Program of the college currently employs two (2) fulltime instructors, one of which is the program director, and three (3) part time instructors.

St. Petersburg College is accredited by the Southern Association of College and School Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC).

## **THE SELF STUDY**

The program director, along with a member of the faculty, and the college's support personnel assisted with gathering materials for the Self-study. The SPC Funeral Services program started working on the Self-study in the fall of 2021.

The program director and full-time faculty reviewed the standards and made recommendations for who was responsible for each standard. In April, Gary Brown and the program director attended the Self-study workshop in Dallas to learn more about “WEAVE” and access to the software.

During the college’s summer session the Self-study report was completed with final review of the report due by the third week of July 2022. Once a firm date of the visit was established, a timeline to complete the Self-study by July 26, 2022 was developed. On July 26, the Self-study was submitted.

The following staff members assisted in the construction of the Self-study:

- Deanna Stentiford, Dean of Health Sciences
- Kevin Davis, Program Director
- Gary Brown, Faculty
- Joshua Brown, Librarian
- Lilly Gallo, Student

## **STANDARD 1: STRUCTURE, ORGANIZATION, and ADMINISTRATION**

Curriculum for the college funeral services program is guided by Florida Administrative Code Rule 6A-10.024 (1.1).

The Program Director regularly reviews the quality of the program and its courses, not only for internal assurance, but also for compliance with regulatory bodies. Working collaboratively with the deans, the Program Director utilizes the College's written Curriculum and Instruction Process and a New Course Approval Form when initiating changes **(1.1)**.

The Senior Vice President of Instruction and Academic Affairs reviews curriculum revisions. The process includes reviews of reports detailing class sizes and actual enrollment for each course within degree requirements.

The Funeral Services Program Director is responsible for making all classroom and clinical teaching assignments **(1.1.2)**.

Evidence was presented in the Self-study supporting state acceptance and development of curriculum, new course approval and curriculum review.

The Program Director, Kevin Davis, is responsible for hiring and terminating faculty within the Funeral Services Department, with input from the Hiring Committee and approval from the Dean of Health Sciences and Vice President of Academic Affairs **(1.1.3)**. A full description of the posting of positions, selection process and college approval for a new hire was outlined in the Self-study.

The College assesses instructors annually using Faculty180 software. Faculty evaluations consist of several steps: First, faculty self-assess their goal results from the previous academic year. Next, the program director considers faculty responses, student survey of instruction scores, and classroom observations in appraising the instructor. Finally, the faculty member and program director review and submit their combined evaluation to the Dean of Health Science **(1.1.3)**. A webpage from Faculty 180 was presented as evidence with SPC login.

St. Petersburg College has an open door admissions policy for students who hold a high school diploma or equivalent. Applicants pay a \$40 application fee and submit either their high school transcripts or college transcripts.

Once admitted to the College, students may apply to the Funeral Services Program by completing a drug and background screening, and the limited enrollment application for the program found in the Funeral Services Associate in Science Program Admission Requirements check list **(1.1.4)**.

The check list used for program admission was submitted in the Self study.

St. Petersburg College's authority to grant the Associate Degree in Funeral Services is found in the Florida Administrative Code; Rule 6A-14.030.

Programs for which SPC awards academic credit are developed and revised by faculty in accordance with the Board of Trustees Procedure P6Hx23-3.04 and St. Petersburg College's curriculum process **(1.1.5)**.

Faculty and deans collaborate with advisory boards, comprised of local industry experts and contemporary practitioners, to identify key workforce skills and knowledge areas. Program content is also designed to meet appropriate state rule and law through the State Common Prerequisite

Manual, the FLDOE Curriculum Frameworks, the Guiding Principles and Policies for Baccalaureate Programs, and Florida Administrative Rule 6A-14.030.

St. Petersburg College has policies and procedures that conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education and to Florida Administrative Rule 6A-10.033, Federal Definition, and the SACS-COC policy (1.1.6). All references made in the above statements were cited in the Self study.

The SPC Board of Trustees is specifically authorized to adopt rules, procedures, and policies, consistent with state law and rules of the State Board of Education, to guide college governance, personnel, budget and finance, administration, programs, curriculum and instruction, buildings and grounds, travel and purchasing, technology, students, contracts and grants, or college property. The Board of Trustees Rules and Procedures are maintained on the St. Petersburg College Website (1.3). The governor of Florida appoints the trustees to the board.

The roster of the governing board members was submitted as evidence in the Self study.

Bylaws for St. Petersburg College's Board of Trustees (BOT) are found in the St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees 2019-20 Board Governance: Authority and Responsibilities manual, posted on SPC's website (1.3.2).

Twenty-eight individuals were listed in the Self study as members of the Advisory Board for the Funeral Service Program. Six members were listed as ex-officio (1.3.3). Seven members of the Advisory Board met with the Site Visit Team.

The Board of Trustees Rules Manual and the College Procedures Manual are provided for all students and employees as the official statement of the Board's rules and the College's operating procedures. The rules have been adopted by the Board of Trustees and are based on the Florida Constitution, Florida statutes, State Board of Education regulations and Florida Administrative Codes (1.4).

The Employee Handbook, Faculty Manual, and Student Handbook are additional documents establishing authority for individual components within the institution.

SPC's President, Dr. Tonja Williams and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Matthew Liao-Troth, maintain open-door policies that allow any faculty to discuss issues facing the school. The Funeral Services faculty also enjoy an open-door policy with the Dean, Dr. Deanna Stentiford. The Dean receives and reviews the results of student surveys of instruction each semester to confirm that learning opportunities meet SPC's standards (1.5).

Part of St. Petersburg College's 2021-2024 Strategic Plan is the Employee Experience and Engagement section, which outlines strategies to build an inclusive culture of care and sense of belonging to strengthen employee engagement, productivity and growth.

The strategic plan referenced above was included as evidence in the Self study.

The Dean holds monthly sessions with the head of each department, including the Funeral Services Program Director, for updates. In the Fall Semester the President holds a Welcome Back seminar to apprise all faculty and administration with College initiatives **(1.5.3)**.

The mission of St. Petersburg College is to *empower our students and community to achieve success and economic mobility through academic excellence and engagement* **(1.6)**. The mission statement for the institution is found on the college website, in the student handbook and in the college catalog.

St. Petersburg College's organizational chart and the College of Health Science's organizational chart, which includes the Funeral Services Program was included in the Self study **(1.7)**.

The Funeral Services Program is administered by Kevin Davis, Program Director. Mr. Davis' job description was included in the Self study as evidence.

All faculty members (full-time and adjuncts) report directly to the program director. The program director relays communication between college administration and faculty **(1.7.2)**.

The Program Director of Funeral Services teaches nine (9) clock hours (ECH) annually and receives thirty-three (33) clock hours release time for administrative duties **(1.7.2.a)**.

Kevin Davis is a licensed Funeral Director and Embalmer in the State of Florida (license number (F045543). Mr. Davis transcripts were attached in the Self study and verified by the Site Visit Team **(1.8)**.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The SPC Funeral Services Program is taught entirely online with the exception of Embalming I Lab (FSE2101L), Embalming II Lab (FSE2141L), and Restorative Art Lab (FSE2120L).

The Funeral Services Program went on-line in 2001 prior to the existence of COA Distance Education Authorization requirements.

SPC offers On-line Learning Services (OLS) for helping both faculty and students with technological support to be successful. Vicki Westergard, Executive Director of Instructional Design and Development is responsible for OLS, reports to Sabrina Crawford, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness. Also assisting with Technical Support issues is Steven Moody, Director of Technical Support Services. Steven reports to Janette Hunt, Vice President of Finance and Business Operations.

All Funeral Services faculty report directly to the Program Director.

Evidence was provided in the Self study for faculty online support as well as student online support.

## **STANDARD 2: PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

St. Petersburg College lists the program learning outcomes as required by the ABFSE verbatim as stated in Standard 2.1. These objectives are found in the Student Handbook, on the college website, and as an independent document provided to students (2.2).

The program learning outcomes are assessed and reviewed annually using data from the NBE, Employee and Graduates Surveys as well as class assessments (2.3).

The program states that as a result of these assessments and a decline in the NBE scores, the institution has implemented new admission policy, and greater rigor for the funeral service program.

### **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The Funeral Services Program at St. Petersburg College only offers on-line classes, except for the three clinical classes in the program (Embalming I Lab, Embalming II Lab, and Restorative Art Lab). All program learning outcomes discussed in the above narrative pertain to the online delivery of classes and instruction.

## **STANDARD 3: ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES & ETHICAL STANDARDS**

Equal Employment Opportunities relevant to this Standard are addressed in the following college sources:

- Faculty Manual, pages 14-15
- Human Resources Website

Grievance procedures for employees and students relevant to this Standard are addressed in the following St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees (SPC BOT) policy sources:

- SPC BOT Rules and Procedures for Various Grievances
- SPC BOT Employee Grievance Procedure P6Hx23-2.021
- SPC BOT Student Grievance & Appeals Procedure P6Hx23-4.36
- SPC Website Student Rights
- SPC BOT Student Disciplinary Procedure
- SPC BOT Student Disciplinary Rules
- SPC BOT Sexual Harassment & Relationships
- SPC BOT Title IX Sexual Harassment
- SPC Website Sexual Misconduct

Student equality issues relevant to this Standard are addressed in the following college sources:

- Pages 47-50 of the Student Handbook



- SPC College Catalog, pg. 3

Financial Aid relevant to this Standard is addressed in the following college sources:

- Pages 45-46 of Student Handbook
- SPC Financial Aid Website Linked from Student Handbook Table of Contents
- Page 14 College Catalog

All of the above references to location of policy were supported with samples of the policy as evidence in the Self study **(3.1.1)**.

Course descriptions are found on the Funeral Services Program's website. General admission information for St. Petersburg College is found in the College Catalog, pg. 31-42, and on the College's website. Admission information specific to the Funeral Services Program is found on the Program's website **(3.1.2.a; 3.1.2.b)**.

Withdrawal policies and procedures are found in the following places **(3.1.2.d)**:

- Syllabus Addendum under ATTENDANCE/ACTIVE PARTICIPATION/WITHDRAWAL POLICIES
- On the College's website linked from page 14 of the '21-'22 College Catalog
- Within MyCourses Support and Student Services Hub
- BOT P6Hx23-4.31 PROCEDURE: WITHDRAWAL
- Student Handbook, pg. 39

Graduation policies and procedures are published in the following places **(3.1.2.d)**:

- SPC Website
- '21-'22 College Catalog, pg. 52-57
- BOT P6Hx23-4.24 Procedure
- BOT P6Hx23-4.29 Procedure

Academic Calendars **(3.1.2.e)**:

- 2021-2022 Academic Calendar
- 2022-2023 Academic Calendar
- SPC Website

The College's grading policy is found in **(3.1.2.f)**:

- The 2021-2022 College Catalog, pg. 24-27
- BOT Procedure P6Hx23-4.20 *Grading System*

The Funeral Services Program's Grading Policy is more stringent than the College's system and is found:

- On page 4 of the Funeral Services Program Student Handbook
- In all Funeral Services course syllabi

Tuition and refund policies for SPC are located under Financial Aid on the College's website **(3.1.2.g)**:

- Tuition Costs at SPC
- How to Pay Tuition
- SPC Tuition Refunds
- BOT P6Hx23-5.19 Student Fees, Transfers & Refunds

Samples of all referenced materials listed above were included in the Self study and verified by the Site Visit Team.

The SPC BOT policy (BOT P6Hx23-5.919) for records retention and destruction was included in the Self study as evidence. The electronic system is backed up on servers. The computer servers are also backed up in case of natural disaster at an off campus site **(3.1.3.a)**.

The Office of Admissions and Records is responsible for the policies and oversight of operations regarding student records **(3.1.3.a)**.

The Program Director is responsible for maintaining program records. The Program Director secures all documents for ABFSE accreditation. Documents since spring 2020 are electronic, stored on the Program Director's computer, backed up on portable hard drives and in the Cloud. Documentation prior to 2020 is in paper form stored in the Program Director's office **(3.1.3.b)**.

The Site Visit Team verified the records are kept in a fireproof storage facility.

SPC academic transcripts designate student work in semester hours using a standard 4.0 grading system **(3.1.3.c)**. A sample of a student transcript was included in the Self study.

St. Petersburg College offers only one (1) ABFSE Accredited Program in Funeral Services. The ABFSE Accreditation Statement is found in the following SPC sources **(3.2)**:

- The Funeral Services AS Degree Program Information on SPC's Website
- The Funeral Services Program Student Handbook, pg. 2

SPC offers a Funeral Arts Certificate not accredited by the ABFSE. This certificate is designed to meet state requirements for the Funeral Director license without the embalming component **(3.3)**.

Standard 3.3.1 concerning the non-accredited certificate program offered by St. Petersburg College is met in College publications. A sample of the certificate program transcript was included in the Self study and meets the requirements of **Standard 3.3**.

Students may grieve or appeal certain determinations made and actions taken by the college according to the Board of Trustees Student Grievances and Appeals Procedure. Different processes are used to handle student grievances at St. Petersburg College based on the nature of the grievance.

Students may not appeal grading on individual assignments or exams. Only the final grade in a course may be appealed to the Dean. Student Grievances and Appeals Procedure 4.36 **(3.4)**.

A detailed description of steps students may take to file a grievance and a detailed description of the College's steps of resolving a grievance was included in the Self study (3.4.1). The process for a student to follow to file a grievance is described in the student handbook and website.

No complaints have been filed since the last accreditation visit (3.4.2).

Academic integrity and honesty policies can be accessed in their entirety on SPC's Student Rights website under the Academic Policies link and are further referenced in the following college sources (3.5):

- page 38, SPC Student Handbook
- BOT Procedure P6Hx23-4.461 Academic Integrity
- BOT 6Hx23-4.461 Academic Honesty Policy

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Distance Education at St. Petersburg College is currently the only delivery method for the Funeral Services Program. For that reason, advertising of the program is completed on-line through the institutional website. The Program's website explains that while flexibility is built into the program, students are still expected to receive practical hands-on learning in labs (Embalming I Clinical, Embalming II Clinical and Restorative Art Clinical). All publications, web pages, the College Catalog, and Funeral Services Handbook are for distance education.

Students are required to participate in clinical/practicum hours on campus and at a funeral facility local to them.

Before students are admitted into the Funeral Services Program they must attend a live orientation. In this orientation they are presented the requirements and conditions of the program and classes. The College publishes a website for on-line learning which provides self-tests for potential students to prepare them for on-line courses.

During orientation students are reminded of the requirements of the three (3) lab classes and Professional Practicum. This information is also published on the Program website.

When accepted into the Program, students receive an email notification directing them to attend a mandatory orientation. Information published by the Conference with each state's licensing requirements is attached to the email. During orientation students are asked to identify the state in which they wish to practice after graduation, and are encouraged to inform the Program if they intend to seek licensure outside of Florida.

The accredited and non-accredited Funeral Services programs are clearly distinguished from each other with ABFSE disclaimers and degree vs certification information published on their respective webpages:

- Funeral Arts Certification
- Funeral Services AS Degree

Students admitted to SPC are issued a unique student ID number. With this ID number students create a password to log into all course work and activities. Students are also provided a picture ID to use while on campus. For all proctored tests students must use Honorlock, the school's exam proctoring service.

## **STANDARD 4: FINANCE**

The program director serves as budget supervisor responsible for administering the approved funds allocated to the program.

All budget requests and expenditures must be requested prior to authorization and be submitted on the correct form with the budget supervisor's signature and the appropriate office approval before being processed. Each budget manager is responsible for his/her program budget. All transactions requesting funds or services are checked by the appropriate budget number before being processed **(4.1)**.

Annually in the spring the College starts the process to establish a budget for the next year. This process begins with an on-line training session to educate the budget supervisors (program director) on how to complete the zero base budgeting process **(4.4)**.

Using the previous year's expenditures, the program director proposes a new budget that includes resources to meet the Program's outcomes for the next academic year. Once completed, the Dean of Health Sciences approves and forwards the budget to the VP of Academics for final approval. This process gives the program director input on the process of having an adequate budget for the program **(4.4)**.

Budget planning workshop procedures and training were included in the Self study.

The Florida Auditor General conducts the financial audit of the College using Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The College had no audit exceptions or advisories noted in the FY2021 Audit **(4.3)**. The 2021 audit report for the College was included as evidence in the Self study.

In the event of an unexpected expense, the program director can request funds from the Dean of Health Sciences. An example of this occurred in 2019, when one of the embalming machines stopped working and repairs totaled \$1,500. A request was sent to the Dean and funds were provided to fix the machine out of the Health Education Center Provost account **(4.6)**.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

SPC has maintained its financial responsibility to the Funeral Services Program since the Program's inception in 1992 and when the Program began offering distance education classes twenty (20) years ago. There are no concerns about the institution's or the Program's financial stability.

## STANDARD 5: CURRICULUM

St. Petersburg College provided a B-6 Form for the Associate of Science Degree Program. The form arranges the courses in the required ABFSE five content areas according to the curriculum distribution requirements **(5.1)**.

The College website indicate the Associate of Science program consists of seventy-two (72) semester hours **(5.2)**. The program follows a logical and organized plan that allows the students to complete the program in eighteen (18) months. It is noted that most of the student body complete the program while attending part-time.

The degree program's curriculum distribution is as follows:

- Public Health 19 Semester hours
- Business Management and Professional 19 semester hours
- Social Science/Humanities 6 Semester hours
- Legal, Ethical, Regulatory 6 Semester hours
- General Education 22 Semester hours

A review of the syllabi for each course provides information about the structure of the course, evaluations at regular intervals, the goals and grading scale for the course. It was noted that most syllabi require the student to provide documentation that the student reviewed the syllabi.

Courses are listed that require prerequisites and are numbered appropriately for both general education and professional education **(5.3)**.

The curriculum for the AS program appears to cover all of the required content areas listed in Standard **(5.4)**. Clinical requirements are to be completed on campus or at approved clinical sites requiring the ten (10) embalmings, plus two (2) required embalmings on campus with the funeral service faculty. It was noted that Human Anatomy and Ethics were not included in the listed content areas but were included in the General Education component of the program **(5.4.1 – 5.4.5)**.

Technical competences are certified by the clinical instructor requiring a signed clinical sheet for each embalming case.

Clinical sites are approved using videos produced and narrated by the student with strict guidelines as evidenced in the video provided to the site Team **(5.4.6)**. A uniform embalming report provides for the documentation of the required procedures for each embalming to provide active participation in the minimum required tasks **(5.4.6.b)**.

The embalming reports are signed by both the student and the clinical instructor and provide evidence of student's active participation in each case **(5.4.6.c&d)**. Students are required to prove technical competency during the two required on-campus embalmings with a faculty member **(5.4.6.e)**.

The program allows students to document the clinical site with a video of the site created and narrated by the student prior to start of the clinical assignment.

The preceptor must complete training, provide documentation of license, and be approved by the clinical site state (5.4.6.f&g). The restorative art laboratory setting is accomplished by providing RA practice during the embalming clinical as well as requiring each student to document a wax RA project that is inspected and graded on campus (5.4.7).

Participation in Funeral Directing requirements is documented using a Funeral Directing Task Report and a First Call Role Play evaluation sheet. These documents provide the documentation of each task required for funeral directing.

The student must complete the required tasks, required five (5) funerals, first call roll play, completion of forms, authorizations and permits, and each is documented by date and signature of the student and the instructor.

Documentation for the past seven (7) years was provided to the Site Visit Team.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The Funeral Services Program at St. Petersburg College offers only on-line classes, except for three clinical experiences (Embalming I, Embalming II, and Restorative Art).

All courses, regardless of delivery method, are reviewed and approved by the SPC Curriculum Committee, comprised of faculty and administrators throughout the institution who ensure classes meet specific standards. All on-line courses are reviewed by the On-line Services Team at SPC to ensure activities, accessibility and syllabi meet guidelines.

Each course syllabus has a schedule of assignments that illustrates the regular faculty initiated interaction with students.

## **STANDARD 6: FACULTY**

The St. Petersburg faculty consists of two (2) full-time faculty and three (3) part-time faculty all of which are licensed funeral directors and embalmers. One member of the full-time faculty also serves in an administrative role at the College.

Each faculty member is appropriately credentialed in their area. All faculty have earned at least the master's degree and two have earned the doctorate level degree (6.1). A review of the transcripts for full and part-time faculty provided evidence of attained academic degrees (6.1.1).

All faculty members have earned the appropriate level degree in the required time frame which include those teaching as laboratory assistants and clinical instructors (6.1.2 – 6.1.3). All faculty teaching embalming, funeral directing, and restorative art are graduates of ABFSE accredited programs as indicted on their transcript and the Faculty Chart provided as well as copies of their funeral directors and embalmers license.

A copy of each faculty member's license was provided for review (6.1.4). The College provides clinical training on-campus using full-time faculty members as well as off-campus funeral home training sites.

Off-campus training site administrators must complete a training session using the College provided training manual and sign an agreement stating such. A copy of off-campus site's license, and the preceptor's license is provided and checked with each state agency prior to clinical assignments. All preceptors are graduates of ABFSE accredited programs as indicated on the preceptor approval check list **(6.2)**.

The College provides guidelines related to behavior, ethics, and discrimination policies. These policies are found in the Employee Handbook which also include student and employee conduct and behavior, and disciplinary actions **(6.3)**.

The College provides ample opportunity for faculty development as indicated in the Employee Handbook. These opportunities give the faculty member the chance to be involved in the program planning research and instruction **(6.5)**.

The program provides instructional support for the full-time faculty in the form of library access as indicated by the library links provided in the report, also pictures were provided of the appropriate office space provided for full-time faculty **(6.6)**.

The College did not provide documentation of the appropriate ratios in the Self study, but the College did provide the information for class sizes and appears to be within the required ratios for both the lectures and labs.

The program does state that no more than three (3) students may participate in any clinical assignment and the clinical instructor works one on one with each student. However, it was stated in the site visit that occasionally four (4) students may be working in a clinical assignment.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Instructors are selected through a traditional hiring process for their teaching ability, and training is subsequently provided to teach online. Interviews for program faculty examine the applicant's computer skills and ability to navigate through technical problems.

Previous work history, online learning experience, and communications are reviewed and considered.

SPC requires all its instructors, including Funeral Service faculty, to obtain online certification prior to teaching distance classes.

## **STANDARD 7: FACILITIES**

St. Petersburg College provides adequate space that is conducive for students to achieve their education goals. It is also evident that through the observation of campus facilities that all federal and state requirements are adhered to.

The Funeral Services program is located in the health education center (HEC). St. Petersburg College provides two (2) areas on the campus for instruction in embalming and restorative art labs (7.1.2) which have sufficient equipment and supplies for students.

Students are being exposed to the technical side as well as the marketing side of funeral service for traditional and nontraditional services. This is demonstrated through the off-site funeral homes where students can fulfill the requirements in embalming and practicum requirements. The Team visited one of the offsite facilities, Anderson McQueen Funeral Home and Crematory, 7820 38<sup>th</sup> St; St. Petersburg, FL, and spoke with Heather Daviduk, a funeral director employed there.

Students are also exposed to the cremation side of the industry. This allows the student to be well rounded in the ever changing facets of the funeral industry. A list of fifty-eight (58) funeral homes are provided for students for off-site instruction.

This is a concern since each funeral home is required to meet all OSHA and State standards. OSHA standards require the funeral home to have a current test performed when any new persons are working in the prep room. (7.2.3, 7.2.4).

*Air Quality Formaldehyde results report for the college was last completed in 2017, which was a concern for the Site Visit Team. By OSHA standards this should be updated when a new individual enters the preparation room for staffing or training purposes.*

Written affiliation agreements are in place and are current between the college and funeral homes.

## **STANDARD 8: LIBRARY/LEARNING RESOURCES**

The Health Education Center library at St. Petersburg College has an estimated 8,300 physical print books, 65,000 eBooks and over thirty-five (35) health and medical related journals which include funeral service. The library is staffed by two (2) full time librarians Joshua Brown, Associate Director of Learning Resources and Shilo Smith, Reference & Instruction Librarian. (8.3).

The library has allocated a budgetary percentage for the funeral services program to ensure new materials are added yearly. All these resources can be accessed remotely through the internet (8.4). The library is open Monday through Thursday 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, and Friday 8:30-1:30 pm. Students and staff have access to 42 desktop computers, 11 group study rooms and an on-site librarian that can offer services in person or remotely by using Ask A Librarian Reference service or at Tutor.com.

### **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The Team was able to visit with Joshua Brown, Associate Director of Learning Resources, who verified that St. Petersburg College meets the requirements for distance learning in **Standard 8**.

Online orientation for students was provided in the Self study.



## **STANDARD 9: STUDENTS**

Students at St. Petersburg College are provided The Student Handbook for Funeral Services which lists information about procedures and policies of the program. The handbook is found on the college web site.

St. Petersburg College Student Handbook along with the Handbook for Funeral Service, was found to contain comprehensive coverage of **Standard 9** and acts as a guideline for students on campus and for distance learning.

The handbook offers a complete overview for policies and procedures regarding student health, student regulations, educational requirements, graduation, attendance, guidance, Veterans services, and student involvement. Students are required to participate in orientation before they are eligible for the Funeral Services program. Orientation is now online.

The Team met with Dr. Lisa Leonard, instructional support manager of SPC, who explained standard 9.5. Students with academic difficulties may seek help in two ways; The New Initiative Program which allows students to schedule time with tutors on campus and receive one-on-one help with test preparation and study skills or by utilizing the on-line tutors of the Funeral Services Program who are former students and employed by the St. Petersburg College.

Eva Christensen, Director of Admissions and Records, verifies requirements for graduation utilizing Peoplesoft which is the records system for the college.

The Team met with Maria Drew, Assistant Director of Admissions, who verified all requirements for admissions at St. Petersburg College. The Site Visit Team was also informed about the Auto Grad Processor Program, which is a tracking program for student graduation requirements.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The College is committed to providing equal access and equal opportunity to all students, employees and members of the College community, regardless of the mode of class delivery.

The On-line programs at SPC website and the on-line video channels demonstrate that prior to the start of coursework, students have access to an on-line orientation regarding all technology relevant to the distance education program.

## **STANDARD 10: PROGRAM PLANNING & EVALUATION / ASSESSMENT**

St. Petersburg College provided a written assessment plan that is evaluated based on a three-year cycle. The Funeral Services Program does an Academic Program Viability Report which is part of the program's assessment plan.

The Program, through the Institutional Research and Effectiveness Department, participates in three components of the assessment cycle:

- Annual Viability Reports
- Triennial Program Assessment
- Triennial Comprehensive Program Reviews

Each assessment includes a follow-up report. The assessment plan utilizes employer and graduate surveys, NBE scores, course evaluations and suggestions from the advisory board to provide program improvements.

Assessment results are evaluated by the professional education faculty and the administration of the College. The College publishes a document on each of the assessments reports documenting the results of the report and proposed improvements.

Several changes and recommendations have developed from these assessments for continuous improvement of the program **(10.1)**.

Student evaluations of course and faculty are developed institution wide and is referred to as Student Survey of Instruction (SSI). The SSI program provides for an overall institution wide comparison for all courses as well as just the funeral service courses.

An interview with Maggie Tymms provided an overview of all data collected by the program and the institution. Previous evaluation of the program by the ABFSE resulted in the addition of a student on the Advisory Committee and the addition of budgeted items for the funeral service library **(10.2)**.

The College maintains the NBE pass rates, the graduation rates, and the employment rates since the last accreditation visit. The program maintains the ABFSE required rates for each of these assessments except for one year graduation rate which can be explained by the part-time nature of the program and students mostly working a full-time job.

The evaluation of these assessments has resulted in the implementation of nine (9) modifications to the funeral services program.

The SPC funeral services program has maintained a 3-year average above the ABFSE standard for NBE pass rates, employment rates, and graduation rates for the past seven (7) years. Information is available to document the program's performance on the College website.

These modifications range from changes to textbooks, addition of funeral service tutoring, changes to the admissions requirements, and a new comprehensive testing methodology **(10.3)**.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Distance education students have available on-line training in using the learning management system via the MyCourses Support & Student Services Hub.

As an entirely on-line program, the assessment plan relates only to distance classes.

## **Commendations**

1. The funeral services program at St. Petersburg College has strong support from the college administration.
2. The Advisory Board for the program is very supportive, positive in their comments about the program and the capabilities of students graduated from the program.
3. The funeral services program has a strong director and faculty. Faculty members are knowledgeable in funeral service practices, embalming and restorative arts. Instructors are student centered in their approach to instruction.
4. St. Petersburg College maintains a strong assessment program that collects and analyzes data to inform instruction and strives for continuous improvement.
5. The longevity of the fulltime faculty is a strength for the program.
6. St. Petersburg College maintains strong financial support for the college and program.

## **Concerns**

1. Several remote sites used for practicum experiences were listed on the spreadsheet supplied in the Self study. However, a number of the sites did not appear to be up to date with OSHA and state licensing standards **(7.2.3)**.
2. The OSHA standard for air quality for the campus prep room may not be in compliance **(7.2.3)**.