

Intro to Mortuary Science

MORT - 1010 003

Course Description

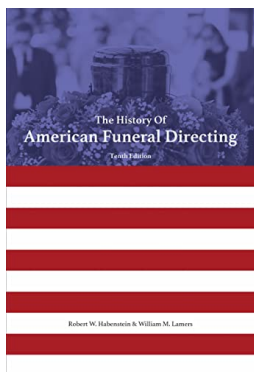
Introductory course on the history of funeral service including studies of ancient/historical mortuary practices, caskets and burial containers, and early anatomists/undertakers and their role in embalming history. Modern funeral service practices and basic embalming procedures will also be discussed.

Semester: All

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Required Text or Materials



Title: The History of American Funeral Directing

ISBN: 978-0-615-98940-2

Authors: Robert W. Habenstein & William M. Lamers

Publisher: National Funeral Directors Association

Publication Date: 2021

Edition: Tenth Edition

For more information on textbook accessibility, contact Accessibility & Disability Services at ads@slcc.edu.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Explain and compare historical funeral service practices and their influence on modern day practices.
- Summarize the evolution of funeral merchandise, funeral transportation, funeral homes, and services.
- Explain current funeral service practices.
- Summarize the development of funeral service education.
- Identify and describe inter-professional relationships and responsibilities.
- Identify and describe methods of disposition.

Grading Scale

Assignments, attendance, quizzes, and exams are calculated in points. Canvas will convert your final score to percentages and letter grades.

You must earn at least a B in this class to apply to the Mortuary Science Program.

The final grade for this course will be computed as follows:

100 – 95 = A

94 – 90 = A-

89 – 87 = B+

86 – 83 = B

82 – 80 = B-

79 – 77 = C+

76 – 74 = C

73 – 71 = C-

70 – 67 = D+

66 – 64 = D

63 and below = E

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism: The writing equivalent of stealing or passing off another's work as your own. Presenting within one's own work the ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgment of that person's authorship is considered plagiarism. Claims of ignorance will not necessarily excuse the offense. You are expected to complete your own work. I'm interested in reading YOUR comments, not what others have written. Plan your week and give yourself enough time to be thoughtful, well-researched, and intentional in your work. If you share a quote or information from someone else, cite them in the text and on a references page. Plagiarism can result in failing the course.

Generative AI Policy: Generative artificial intelligence (AI) software (e.g., ChatGPT) is a rapidly emerging tool that students may be interested in using. However, I am interested in reading your thoughts and opinions. The use of AI to generate content or rephrase what you have written is not allowed in this course and is considered a violation of academic integrity. SLCC students are expected to adhere to the same standards as the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities statement on plagiarism. Presenting generative AI software content as your own violates academic integrity. AI can be used to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, but when it is used for that purpose, it must be noted at the end of your work as one of your sources. Microsoft Word has a spelling and grammar checking tool that is acceptable to use. I will use the AI detector in Canvas to check your work.

All students are expected to follow the SLCC Student Code of Conduct.

Engagement Plan

- I will respond to emails within 48 hours, Monday through Friday. The best way to contact me is via the Canvas Inbox, as I will prioritize this mode of communication over other modes.
- Communication will take place each week during our class on campus.

- Communication with students will be through the Canvas Inbox and assignment feedback. If you do not receive personal feedback on a particular assignment but would like some, please request it.

Keys for Success (how to succeed in the course)

Look at Canvas at the beginning of each week so you can see how much work there is to do.

Turn in all your homework on time (late work is NOT accepted) - it's *amazing* how that can help your grade!

Brief Description of Assignments/Exams

ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments, instructions, and due dates are on Canvas in the Modules. Assignments are to be completed on time. **Homework turned in late will receive a zero.** Completing work on time is a critical skill in funeral service. It is at the instructor's discretion to make exceptions in extenuating circumstances. Look over the modules early in the week to familiarize yourself with the workload.

EXAMS/QUIZZES: There will be a midterm and final exam. Questions come from assigned readings, class lectures, and material on Canvas. The exams are open book/notes. Exams can only be taken on Canvas on the date indicated. **Module quizzes must be completed by the due date** on Canvas. They test your basic understanding of the assigned reading material for that week. Quizzes cannot be taken past the due date.

Course Content Advisory

Because of past or current life experiences, you may find an assignment too emotionally upsetting to complete. If this is the case, please contact me.

Course Schedule

Getting Started Module: Week of Aug. 26

- Syllabus review

- Self-introduction
- Obituary assignment

Module 1: Week of Sep. 1

- Basic industry vocabulary
- What a funeral director does
- Embalming and cremation overview

Module 2: Week of Sep. 8

- Common types of American funerals
- Methods of disposition

Module 3: Week of Sep. 15

- Chapters 1, 2, and 3
 - Pagan Roots of Modern Funeral Practice
 - Early Christian, Hebrew, and Scandinavian Burial
 - Death and Burial Through the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Module 4: Week of Sep. 22

- Chapters 4, 5, and 6
 - Medical Embalmers and the Rise of English Undertakers
 - American Colonial Funeral Behavior
 - Early American Funeral Undertaking

- Native American death beliefs and funeral practices

Module 5: Week of Sep. 29

- **Funeral home and crematory tour.** If you want, you can tour the funeral home and crematory with one of the in-person classes. The tours will be on Tuesday, Sep. 30 at 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday, Oct. 1 at 8:30 a.m. See Canvas for details. Please note that sometimes, due to the funeral home having visitations at the time our tour is scheduled, the tour may need to be rescheduled or even cancelled. Check Canvas the day before class for a message that will tell you if the tour will be given or if it is rescheduled.
- Miscellaneous funeral stuff

Module 6: Week of Oct. 6

- Cemeteries
- Headstones

Module 7: Week of Oct. 13

- Working with those whose customs and beliefs are different than your own
- Unique foreign funeral practices
- Foreign funeral customs

Module 8: Week of Oct. 20

- American Battle Monuments Commission
 - Hallowed Grounds
- Utah Office of the Medical Examiner

Module 9: MONDAY, OCTOBER 27.

- **Midterm Exam – Take on Canvas AT ANY TIME ON MONDAY, OCT. 27**

Module 10: Week of Nov. 3

- Chapters 7 and 8
 - Coffins, Burial Cases, and Caskets
 - Through the Ice-Age into Embalming
- Green funerals

Module 11: Week of Nov. 10

- Current Events
- Chapter 9
 - Transportation: Carriage to Gas Buggy
- Funeral vehicles
- Historical significance and evolution of cremation

Module 12: Week of Nov. 17

- Chapters 10, 11, and 12
 - The Pattern of Late 19th-Century Funerals
 - The Associational Impulse
 - Institutional Growth and Modern Associational Developments
- Modern merchandise
- History of consolidation companies

Module 13: Week of Nov. 23

- Chapter 13
 - The Panorama of Modern Funeral Practice
- Grief
- Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT)

Module 14: Week of Dec. 1

- Ethics
- The Undertaking

Module 15: MONDAY, DECEMBER 8

- **Final Exam – Take on Canvas AT ANY TIME ON MONDAY, DEC. 8**

Instructional Continuity Plan in the Case of College Closure

Instructional delivery, course requirements, deadlines, and grading policies are subject to change in the event of a campus closure that disrupts academic activities. In case of such an event, your instructor will communicate information about course changes as soon as possible via email or Canvas.

How to Navigate to Canvas

College Wide Student Learning Outcomes

- Acquire substantive knowledge in the intended major and throughout General Education
- Communicate effectively
- Develop quantitative literacies necessary for the chosen field of study
- Think critically
- Express themselves creatively
- Develop civic literacy and the capacity to be community-engaged learners who act in mutually beneficial ways with community partners
- Develop the knowledge and skills to work with others in a professional and constructive manner
- Develop information literacy
- Develop computer literacy

Institutional Policies

As members of our academic community, we would like to invite you to review the Institutional Syllabus which covers important policies and procedures. This document contains important links for students on the code of student rights and responsibilities, academic integrity, and grading policies, Title IX and other important acknowledgements. By familiarizing yourself with this information, you can help us create a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

For more information, navigate to the Institutional Policies tab on the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page.

Learning Support and Tutoring Services

We are pleased to offer a range of tutoring and learning support services to help you achieve your academic goals. Whether you need assistance with a specific subject or want to improve your study skills, you have many options for tutoring or other support.

To learn more about the services we offer and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Tutoring and Learning Support tab. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources to help you succeed in your studies. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tutoring session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you in any way we can.

Advising and Counseling Support Services

At our institution, we are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth. That's why we offer a range of advising and counseling services to help you navigate the challenges of college life. To learn more about the resources available to you and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Advising and Counseling Support Services tab. Our advising team and the support centers across campus are here to support you in achieving your goals and overcoming any obstacles you may face.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	Corpsies	Discussion	0
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	SLCC WAC Transparent Assignment Template	Assignment	0
9/1/25	Discussion Groups	Discussion	5
9/1/25	SELF INTRODUCTION	Discussion	5
9/1/25	Syllabus quiz	Quiz	10

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
9/1/25	Common Vocabulary Quiz	Quiz	10
9/1/25	Obituary Assignment	Assignment	25
9/2/25	MODULE 1 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
9/8/25	Preferred method of disposition	Discussion	5
9/8/25	MODULE 2 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
9/15/25	Module 3 Quiz	Quiz	6
9/15/25	Chapters 1, 2, and 3 Reflection	Discussion	10
9/16/25	MODULE 3 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
9/22/25	Chapters 4, 5, & 6 Quiz	Quiz	24
9/22/25	Colonial Americans	Quiz	10
9/22/25	The Undertaker and the Quack	Quiz	5
9/22/25	Cemetery Tour	Assignment	15
9/23/25	MODULE 4 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
9/29/25	What did you find most interesting?	Assignment	10

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
9/30/25	MODULE 5 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
10/6/25	Your Own Headstone	Discussion	5
10/6/25	A Cemetery Special	Assignment	10
10/6/25	Funeral Home Tour Report	Assignment	25
10/7/25	MODULE 6 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
10/12/25	Foreign Funeral Customs	Discussion	25
10/14/25	MODULE 7 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
10/20/25	Gettysburg Address	Discussion	10
10/20/25	Hallowed Grounds	Assignment	20
10/21/25	MODULE 8 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
10/27/25	Midterm Exam - Take on Canvas	Quiz	75
11/24/25	Best Funeral Ever	Assignment	10
11/24/25	Grief	Assignment	10
11/25/25	MODULE 13 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION Copy	Assignment	5

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
12/1/25	CASE STUDY: THE EMBALMER, THE BOARD, AND THE BEARSKIN RUG BABY	Assignment	5
12/1/25	Cemetery Holding My Dad's Ashes	Assignment	10
12/1/25	ETHICAL DILEMMAS - WHAT WOULD YOU DO?	Assignment	9
12/1/25	The Undertaking	Assignment	40
12/2/25	MODULE 14 ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION	Assignment	5
12/8/25	Final Exam - Take on Canvas	Quiz	100

Student Academic Calendar

As students you should be aware of all important dates in the semester, such as the day that courses begin and end, as well as the drop date and the last day to withdraw. To learn more about those dates, navigate to the Student Academic Calendar below:

[SLCC Student Academic Calendar](#)

Online Tutoring

Students at SLCC have access to online tutoring through Canvas. From your Canvas course click Online Tutoring in the course navigation and follow the steps to set up an appointment. If this is your first time using the Online Tutoring we recommend you click "Take a Tour" to familiarize yourself with the service.

Note that students only receive 480 minutes of tutoring time each semester. After that we encourage you to use the resources found through this link:

<https://www.slcc.edu/tutoring/index.aspx>

If you have any additional questions reach out to elarningsupport@slcc.edu.