

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the ABFSE office has received these **Frequently Asked Questions**.

ABFSE Executive Director, Robb Smith offers some answers.

Reminder: If you have questions for the Town Hall meeting, please share them *ASAP*.

Q1. Since we are now teaching online during campus closure, can we continue to offer online classes once campus opens again?

A. [The pandemic conditions have been an opportunity for many schools to ‘test the waters’ of distance education. The US Department of Education gave blanket approval for schools to use distance education as a temporary fix for the current pandemic situation. However, if there are plans to continue with DE after the pandemic conditions end a Substantive Change to seek approval of distance education is necessary.](#)

Q2. If a Program is unable to facilitate completion of embalming clinical requirements on the normal timeline, what is our obligation to students? Do we allow the students to graduate? If not, how do we handle this situation?

A. [Basic embalming competence must still be demonstrated as a requirement for graduation. If students will be unable to complete this requirement on the normal timeline, they should be notified and the program should make every effort to facilitate timely completion when able to do so. COA offered some suggestions. See the **Coronavirus Precautions and Policy Considerations** on the ABFSE Website.](#)

Q3. Can we temporarily send students to funeral homes that are not approved sites in order to facilitate completion of clinical embalming requirements?

A. [Temporary site approval is acceptable, but clinical sites must be inspected and approved before students report to them. The inspection may be done in-person or virtually according to newly approved guidelines for clinical site visits. Contact the ABFSE office for details.](#)

Q4. Can we partner with another ABFSE accredited program to deliver courses?

A. [Yes](#)

If so, do we need to notify ABFSE?

A. [Arrangements to cope with the pandemic conditions should be reported to the ABFSE office.](#)

Q5. If the pandemic conditions prevent return to the campus, how will we comply with the on-campus Restorative Art requirement?

A. [Create an alternative assignment\(s\) that can be evaluated by faculty. See the **Coronavirus Precautions and Policy Considerations** on the ABFSE Website.](#)

Q6. We require students to complete a simulated NBE on-campus as a requirement for graduation and NBE certification. Can we still require this?

A. This is not an accreditation requirement, but a practice of many programs. If you can find a way to accommodate the students during this period, do it. This answer comes with more questions - Can you still provide the test on campus? If the campus is closed, can you allow off-campus access to your test in some manner?

Q7. Some institutions are shifting to (or considering) pass/fail grading as a pandemic accommodation. If we do this will it impact accreditation.

A. ABFSE accreditation standards do not specify the method of grading to be used. The standards require grading policies to be clearly stated and that students be informed of the grading policies.

Q8. Students are not allowed to go to funeral homes for the funeral observations. What do we do?

A. Funeral observation is not a requirement of a specific course in the ABFSE curriculum. If the program can determine a satisfactory method to verify funeral observations there is no accreditation requirements that says the observations must be completed during a particular course or semester.

Q9. Since some accreditation site visits will be delayed, will this push back every program's scheduled comprehensive reaccreditation?

A. At this point, there are no plans to push back every program's re-accreditation time frame. We are attempting to re-schedule those that are postponed and maintain the existing schedule.

Q10. How are schools fulfilling embalming lab requirements?

A. Accreditation standards require students to participate in 10 embalmings in order to graduate and that certification of technical competence of each graduating student be performed by an individual with faculty status. Twenty-six (of 57 programs) embalm on campus and 56 programs report that at least some embalming is done in funeral homes or other facilities. Flexible alternatives to meet the standards are being considered. See the **Coronavirus Precautions and Policy Considerations** on the ABFSE Website.