

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CANTON, NEW YORK**



MASTER SYLLABUS

FSAD 111– STUDY OF FUNERALS: PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE

CIP Code:

(12.0302) Funeral Direction/Services

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Updated by: October 24, 2023**

**Science, Health and Criminal Justice
Funeral Services Administration
Fall 2024**

A. **TITLE:** Study of Funerals: Past, Present and Future

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** FSAD 111

C. **CREDIT HOURS (Hours of Lecture, Laboratory, Recitation, Tutorial, Activity):**

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours per Week:3

Lab Hours per Week:0

Other per Week: 0

Course Length (# of Weeks): 15

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No

E. **GER CATEGORY:** No

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Fall and Spring

G. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is a historical approach to understanding the cultural and religious beliefs as they pertain to death and dying in various cultures and societies. Religious, historical and present-day funerals and preservation methods are explored and compared to current trends, norms, and practices in funeral service. The student will examine and discuss the role of the funeral director and other death-related professions throughout history beginning with the Ancient Egyptians through contemporary 21st century American culture.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:**

a. Pre-requisite(s): No

b. Co-requisite(s): No

c. Pre- or co-requisite(s): No

I. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

Student Learning Outcome [SLO]	Program Student Learning Outcomes [PSLO]	Institutional Student Learning Outcomes [ISLO]
1. Compare funeral service practices, and various modes of disposition across a variety of cultures and religions.	2.1.10 Demonstrate verbal and written communication skills and research skills needed for funeral service practice.	4. Social Responsibility – Intercultural Knowledge
2. Students will create their own modern-day funeral plans through their own interpretation, analysis, understanding of death and disposition throughout history in various cultures, and religions.	2.1.7 Describe the requirements and procedures for burial, cremation, and other accepted forms of final disposition of human remains.	1. Communication Skills - Written

J. APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT: Yes _____ No X _____

If Yes, select one or more of the following categories:

Classroom/Lab _____
 Internship _____
 Clinical Practicum _____
 Practicum _____
 Service Learning _____
 Community Service _____

Civic Engagement _____
 Creative Works/Senior Project _____
 Research _____
 Entrepreneurship _____
 (program, class, project)

K. TEXTS:

Klicker, R. L. (2018). A walk through time: A history of funeral service. Thanos Institute.

L. REFERENCES:

Habenstein, R. W., & Lamers, W. M. (2010). The history of American funeral directing. National Funeral Directors Association.

Ikram, S. (2015). Death and burial in ancient Egypt. The American University in Cairo Press.

Kramer, K. (1988). The sacred art of dying: How world religions understand death. Paulist Press.

Reader's Digest Association. (1986). The last two million years: Reader's Digest History of man. Reader's Digest Services.

Slaughter, A., & Taylor, T. (2018). Disconnected from death: The evolution of funerary customs & the unmasking of death in America. American Hauntings Ink.

M. **EQUIPMENT:** Microsoft Word or a comparable software. Internet access is required.

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

The grading will be as follows:

Assignment Category	Grade Weight/ Point Distribution
Assignments	40%
Quizzes	30%
Midterm	15%
Final	15%
Total	100%

Your final grade will be calculated based on the following grading scheme:

From %	To %	Letter grade
100	92.0	A
91.9	87.0	B+
86.9	83.0	B
82.9	79.0	C+
78.9	76.0	C
75.9	69.0	D+
68.9	60.0	D
59.9	0	F

O. **SUGGESTED MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS:**

12 Assignments
1 Extra Credit Assignment
6 Quizzes
Midterm Exam
Comprehensive Final Exam

FSAD students must obtain a grade of "C" or better in this course.

P. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:

1. Intro and Ancient Egyptians
 - a. Discuss commonalities across civilization as it relates to funeral service
 - b. Discuss Paganism- the root of all funeral practices
 - c. Discuss the various time periods of Ancient Egypt
 - d. Differentiate caskets, coffins, and sarcophagi
 - e. Discuss Egyptian mythology
 - i. Egyptian Gods and Goddesses of the Underworld
 - f. Egyptian mummification
 - g. Detail the various Egyptian embalming practices
 - h. Egyptian funeral rites
 - i. The Egyptian Underworld
 - j. Discuss the importance and creation of Mastabas and Pyramids
2. Ancient Greeks, Romans, Etruscans
 - a. Discuss Greek and Roman Mythology
 - i. Look at parallels to Egyptian Mythology
 - b. Discuss a background on Ancient Greece, Rome and Eutria and how their civilizations overlap
 - c. Discuss Ancient Greek funeral rites
 - d. Explain Ancient Greece starts the practice of cremation
 - e. Explain the various beliefs on immortality in Ancient Rome
 - f. Explore funeral rites in Ancient Rome
 - g. Explain the first secular undertaker is seen in Ancient Rome
 - h. Discuss Eutria and the derivation of gladiator fights as they were funeral games
3. Ancient Hebrews and Early Christians
 - a. Explain the migration of the Cannanites
 - b. Discuss the major people in the beginning of Hebrew history
 - c. Discuss the Jewish faith and how it has evolved
 - d. Compare and Contrast ancient Jewish practices to modern Jewish practices
 - e. Define Jewish funeral terms
 - f. Explain the creation of Christians from the Hebrews
 - g. Discuss the preparation of Jesus
 - h. Explore the evolution of Christian practices, specifically Roman Catholic practices
 - i. Compare Catholic and Protestant funeral rites
4. Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Celts, Ancient Chinese, and the Vikings
 - a. Discuss the comparison between Ancient Mesopotamia to Ancient Egypt
 - b. Explore Mesopotamian mythology and how it creates their interpretation of the underworld
 - c. Learn Mesopotamian funeral rites
 - d. Discuss the Celtic and Viking backgrounds
 - e. Discuss the Celtic beliefs in reincarnation and the afterlife
 - f. Discuss Celtic funeral rites
 - g. Explore Viking mythology and their afterlife
 - h. Discuss common misconceptions regarding Cremation at sea
 - i. Explore Ancient Chinese History and Taoist beliefs
 - j. Discuss the elaborate and detailed funeral rites of the Ancient Chinese
 - k. Discuss Quingming, a death celebration in China

5. The Incans, Mayans, Aztecs, and Death Celebrations
 - a. Learn the differences between these three civilizations
 - b. Explore the history of the civilizations including their downfall
 - c. Discuss their similar mythologies and their Gods and Goddesses of Death
 - d. Discuss the use of sacrificial offerings
 - e. Explore their beliefs in the underworld and their funeral rites
 - f. Learn the derivation of Day of the Dead
 - g. Explore, compare and contrast a variety of death celebrations around the world
6. The Middle Ages
 - a. Discuss what dictates the middle age period
 - b. Discuss important aspects of the time period
 - c. Analyze changes in funeral practices
 - d. Introduce the Anglo-Saxons
 - e. Discuss the rise of the Roman Catholic Church
 - i. The rise of the belief in purgatory
 - ii. The control the church had over burial and funeral practices
 - f. Discuss the effects of the plague on the funeral industry
 - g. Discuss the rise in barber-surgeons
 - i. Middle age embalming
 - h. Widows in the middle ages
7. Evolution of the Hearse and Casket, Body Snatching
 - a. Showcase the evolution of the hearse
 - b. Compare ancient hearses to modern hearses
 - c. Explore the differences in hearses for genders and wealth
 - d. Look at a variety of phased out coffins
 - e. Discuss the shift from coffins to caskets
 - f. Learn the dimensions of caskets and vaults
 - g. Define resurrectionist
 - h. Explore the positive outcome from body snatching
8. Colonial America, The Victorian Era
 - a. Reflect on important historical events during this time period
 - b. Explore the migration of separatists to the Americas
 - c. Discuss the Protestant Reformation and what that did for funeral rites
 - d. Analyze the beliefs and funeral services of the Puritans before and after the Great Puritan Awakening
 - e. Define the Victorian Mourning periods
 - f. Compare and contrast funeral rites in America and Europe in the Victorian Era
9. Emergence of the American Undertaker, Emergence of Embalming
 - a. Discuss the roots of the modern undertaker
 - b. Discuss Victorian Cat funerals
 - c. Observe and interpret momento moris
 - d. Learn the various people that are attributed to advances in embalming
10. Civil War Era, Military Funerals
 - a. Discuss the history of the Civil War
 - b. Explore the rise in embalming during the Civil War
 - c. Analyze the problems, and exploitation embalmers used at the time period
 - d. Compare funeral practices during the Civil War to modern wars
 - e. Learn the necessary documents needed to obtain military honors for modern funerals
 - f. Explain and watch military honors rendered at a funeral
 - g. Learn the requirements for burials at sea

11. Slave Funerals, The Native Americans, The Mound Builders, Old West Funerals
 - a. Explore the migration of African funeral traditions to the Americas through the slave trade
 - b. Discuss the limitations of funerals for slaves
 - c. Discuss commonalities in funeral rites among Native American tribes
 - d. Explore the burial sites of the mound builders
 - e. Discuss the funeral traditions of the Old West
 - f. Learn the importance of the rider less horse in a funeral procession
12. Women in the Funeral Industry, Funeral Service Education, Publications, and Associations
 - a. Analyze the shift in gender roles within the funeral industry
 - b. Explore the work of well-known Women identifying funeral professionals
 - c. Explain the steps to become a NYS licensed funeral director
 - d. Define continuing education, and how many are needed for licensure
 - e. Explore funeral publications in the industry
 - f. Discuss and compare various professional funeral associations
13. 20th Century, 21st Century Practices
 - a. Explore the shifts in funeral practices to modern day
 - b. Tie modern practices back to our ancient cultures
 - c. Explore the shifts in the industry that we are currently seeing
 - d. Discuss current issues within funeral service
 - e. Dive into the rise in Green or alternative services
14. Cremation
 - a. Define cremation
 - b. Define various parts of the cremation process
 - c. Explore the history of cremation
 - d. Analyze and interpret the current cremation trends and data
 - e. Discuss the green alternative to cremation (aquamation)

Q. LABORATORY OUTLINE: None