



Funeral directors, also called morticians and undertakers, manage funeral homes and arrange the details of a funeral. Funeral directors typically do the following:

- Arrange transportation of the deceased
- Prepare the remains (body)
- Submit paperwork and legal documents
- Consult with the deceased's family
- Help plan funerals
- Discuss and plan funerals with people who wish to arrange their own service in advance

Most funeral directors arrange the details and handle the logistics of funerals. Together with the family, funeral directors establish the locations, dates, and times of wakes, memorial services, and burials. They handle other details as well, such as determining whether the body should be buried, entombed, or cremated. This decision is critical because funeral practices vary among cultures and religions. Although family members or others may handle some details, funeral directors must be able to assist family members in preparing obituary notices and arranging for pallbearers and clergy. They may decorate and prepare the sites of services, arrange for flowers, and provide transportation for the deceased and mourners.

Most funeral directors handle paperwork involved with the person's death, including submitting papers to state officials to get a formal death certificate. Some help resolve insurance claims or apply for veterans' funeral benefits on behalf of the family. They also may notify the Social Security Administration of the death. In many settings, funeral directors embalm the deceased. Embalming is a sanitary and cosmetic process through which the body is prepared for burial, usually in a casket. A growing number of funeral directors work with clients who wish to plan their own funerals in advance to ensure that their needs are met. Many funeral directors also help prepare and ship bodies if the person dies in one place and is to be buried or cremated elsewhere. (*Occupational Outlook Handbook*)

The program to be followed by a pre-mortuary science student is largely determined by the requirements of the state in which you will practice and the mortuary school you will attend. **Gaining acceptance into a mortuary science program is a very competitive process. Completion of the pre-requisite courses does not automatically guarantee admission.** Since the acceptance process is competitive, students pursuing a program of study in pre-mortuary science are encouraged to choose a major as an alternate plan so that they can be working towards a baccalaureate degree concurrently with the pre-mortuary science program. This requires a major/minor combination or a comprehensive major as well as completion of the UNK general studies requirements and other degree requirements as set forth in the college catalog.

The following is based upon the state of Nebraska requirements (60 credit hours required) and requirements for regional mortuary science programs:

Take one of the following options:

Take these 2 courses:

BIOL 103	General Biology	4
BIOL 215	Human Physiology	4

OR take these 2 courses:

BIOL 225	Anatomy and Physiology	4
BIOL 226	Anatomy and Physiology	4

Take one of the following options:

Take these 2 courses:

CHEM 160	General Chemistry	4
CHEM 161	General Chemistry	4

Or take these 2 courses:

CHEM 145	Introductory Chemistry	4
CHEM 150	Consumer Organic Chemistry	4

Take all the following courses:

BIOL 211	Human Microbiology	4
ACCT 250	Beginning Accounting I	3
ACCT 251	Beginning Accounting II	3
FAMS 160	Personal Money Management	3
ENG 101	Introduction to Academic Writing	3
ENG 102	Academic Writing and Research	3
PSY 203	General Psychology	3
SOC 100	Introduction to Sociology or elective	3

Take one of the following:

PSY 230	Human Development	3
PSY 231	Abnormal Behavior and Society	3

Electives to complete a 60 hour program.

Suggested Electives: When choosing electives to complete the 60 hour program, the student should check with the Mortuary Science Program to which he/she intends to apply in order of the state in which he/she plans to practice (if it is not Nebraska).

ACCT 311	Business Law	3
MGT 301	Principles of Management	3
SPCH 100	Fundamentals of Speech Communication	3
	Humanities Elective	3

Academic Guidelines

A minimum GPA of 2.5 is required; however, a higher GPA is preferred and will result in the student being a more competitive applicant. Each required course must be passed with a grade of "C" or better. A grade of "C-" will not be accepted. Students searching for electives should consider courses from the following areas: biology, chemistry, mathematics, sociology, psychology, business administration, healthcare management, and healthcare economics. See your advisor for suggestions. Students should be aware of prerequisites on all courses and plan their coursework accordingly.

Non-Academic Guidelines

There is no magic formula for acceptance into professional school. Admission is based on GPA, shadowing and medical experiences, community involvement and volunteerism, leadership qualities, the interview, the essay, and letters of recommendation. Health Sciences offers opportunities to meet these non-academic guidelines through the Shadowing Program, the Health Science Club, and volunteer experiences. Students should plan to be involved in these types of activities and experiences throughout their undergraduate career. Other important non-academic factors include good moral character, excellent interpersonal skills, a deep commitment to healthcare, evidence of leadership potential and service to others.

The Application Process

Students who wish to make application to a mortuary science program should do so through the website of the respective program.

Criminal Background Checks

Prerequisite for enrollment into any health science professional program is consent for an external background check. This check includes, but is not limited to, past criminal offenses and registry information. If there is evidence of arrest for a crime(s), conviction for a crime(s), presence on an abuse registry, or other information which reasonably suggests that patient safety might be compromised, the student will be asked to provide additional information.

Citizenship/International Students

Professional schools in the health sciences vary as to whether they accept non-U.S. citizens. Some schools that do accept non-citizens require a substantial financial commitment up front. Since not all schools accept non-citizens and since the financial commitment of those that do may be substantial, students should thoroughly research and carefully consider such a decision and discuss it with their pre-health advisors early in their undergraduate years.

Licensure Requirements

Licensure in the State of Nebraska requires several criteria including:

- Completion of 60 semester hours of college credits
- Completion of a full course of instruction in an accredited mortuary science school
- Completion of 12 months of service as an apprentice under the supervision of a licensed funeral director and embalmer practicing in the State of Nebraska
- Have attained at least the age of 19.
- Have good character and is a citizen of the U.S., an alien lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence under the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) and who is eligible for a credential under the Uniform Credentialing Act, or a nonimmigrant whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment in the United States
- Successfully pass the National Board examination for Funeral Service administered at accredited schools of mortuary science. The Nebraska Board does not administer this examination. Nebraska requires an average score of 75% or above.
- Successfully pass the written jurisprudence and Vital statistics examinations administered by the Department. Nebraska requires a score of 75% or above on each examination.
- Submit the appropriate applications and pay the licensure fees.

Websites

State of Nebraska – HHS, Licensing Division

http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_mhcs_fun_funeraldirecting.aspx

UNK Health Sciences

www.unk.edu/healthsciences

Suggested Sequence of Key Courses

	Fall	Spring
Year 1	CHEM 145 or CHEM 160 BIOL 211	CHEM 150 or CHEM 161 MATH 102
Year 2	ACCT 250 BIOL 225 (recommended)	ACCT 251 BIOL 226 (recommended)

- Completion of one semester of chemistry is a pre-requisite for BIOL 225.
- Completion of MATH 102 and sophomore standing are pre-requisites for ACCT 250.
- A minimum MATH ACT score of 22 or prior completion of College Algebra (MATH 102) or higher is a pre-requisite for CHEM 160.
- Completion of one semester of chemistry is a pre-requisite for BIOL 225.