



MRTS 1271 – Funeral Service State Board Preparation - ONLINE

Course Syllabus: Spring 2023

“Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed.”

Instructor: Rebecca M. Robidas Gardner

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Virtual Office: Direct Link in Classroom



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
Office Hours	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM (CST) Virtual	9:00 AM – 2:00 PM (CST) Virtual	Available by appointment	Available by appointment	Available by appointment	*Link to my virtual office can be found in the left-hand navigation of blackboard course

This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.

Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.

Course Description: 2 credit hours.

Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hours of lecture each week.

This is an intensive review of the curriculum in the funeral service arts. The course is intended to prepare students for the National Board Exam.

Prerequisite(s): MRTS 1301, MRTS 1330, MRTS 1342

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon the completion of this course, the student shall be able to demonstrate the following competencies with a minimum grade of 80%:

1. Determine and discuss all aspects of funeral directing. Obtain and complete all documents and paperwork necessary for funeral arrangements. Have knowledge and ability to explain all aspects of funeral directing.
2. Determine and discuss purpose of funeral service rites and customs. Determine diversity of family and society. Understand family, social, and cultural structures.
3. Determine, discuss, maintain and execute merchandise needs of the funeral home. Understand and implement merchandising applications in funeral service.
4. Prepare, evaluate, explain, and/or execute the following: wills, deeds, bonds, credit agreements, contracts, insurance, estate claims, disclosures, funeral home contract, and payment policy.
5. Identify the historical foundations of various funeral practices.
6. Discuss funeral's emotional, psychological benefits, facilitate grief process, and discuss effects of death

- on special populations and importance of viewing deceased. Identify needs for counseling.
7. Discuss, define, and explain the following: products, services, merchandise, funeral home operations, and cemetery operations. Define and comply with Federal and State regulations regarding funeral service.
 8. Identify the primary considerations for funeral directors working with those interested in cremation as a method of disposition.

Evaluation/Grading Policy:

Assignments:

D.E.A.D. Registration 1 @ 10 Points = **10 Points**

Graduate Virtual Meeting 1 @ 50 Points = **50 Points**

D.E.A.D. Drills 13 @ 30 Points (each) = **390 Points**

Total Assignment Points = 450 Points

Exams:

Respondus Exam 1 @ 50 Points = **50 Points**

Exams 8 @ 100 Points (each) = **800 Points**

NBE - Arts Practice Exam 1 @ 100 Points = **100 Points**

Final Exam 1 @ 100 points = **100 Points**

NBE- Arts Exam 1 @ **500 Points**

Total Exam Points = **1,550 Points**

Total Course Points = 2,000

Percent

A 92 - 100

B 85 - 91

C 80 - 84

D 75 - 79

F 74 & below

Points

A 1380-1500

B 1275 -1379

C 1200-1274

D 1125-1199

F < 1125

*A grade of C or better constitutes a passing grade in the Funeral Service Education program.

Required Instructional Materials:

National Board Exam Review for Funeral Service **Author:** Taggart

Publisher: Death Education Assessment Drills **ISBN Number:** 2800249600621

Death Education Assessment Drills (D.E.A.D) Access Code **Author:** D.E.A.D

Publisher: Death Education Assessment Drills **ISBN Number:** 2802061895438

Required External Fees:

Fees associated with taking the NBE are **NOT paid for by NTCC**. The current exam fee is \$285 for the NBE - Arts.

Optional Instructional Materials:

Textbooks used previously in MRTS courses are recommended for use in this course.

Appropriate readings will be supplied in Blackboard and through independent research.

Course Notes:

This course is considered a capstone course, which is intended to ensure the student has demonstrated mastery of the required subjects. This mastery will be accomplished by each student in the following manners:

- Students must be able to pass two (2) D.E.A.D. Drills in each subject of this capstone course with a grade of 80% or higher each week.
- The weekly D.E.A.D. grade will be calculated as an average of the students two highest subject unit grades achieved using the D.E.A.D. program.
- Students will have one (1) attempt to pass each subject unit exam, NBE -Arts practice Exam, and course final.

A “Practice National Board Exam” is a required component of this course. If a student does not receive a grade of 85% or higher on their practice exam, the student will be required to complete a final exam in the course.

Once a student has completed all requirements for graduation, the student’s name will be certified with the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB) to register for the National Board Exam (NBE). All students will receive an “Incomplete” for this course. The student must show proof that they have taken the National Board Exam (NBE) - Arts section. Evidence of NBE - Arts completion will be submitted via email to Ms. Gardner. Once proof has been submitted, regardless of passing or failing, the final course grade will be released. Completion of the NBE is required within 45 days of the last official class day. Please note that there are fees associated with taking the NBE and are NOT paid for by NTCC. The current exam fee is \$285 for the NBE Arts section.

Library Resources:

Need library resources but don't know where to start? Ask a librarian! Research help is available in person at the Charlie and Helen Hampton Library Reference Desk, by phone at 903-434-8151, or by emailing the Director of Library Services, Ron Bowden at rbowden@ntcc.edu. The library’s website, www.ntcc.edu/library, offers access to over 80 databases (including an eBook collection and a streaming video collection), a citation style guide, tutorials, and a link to their online catalog. The Funeral Service Education’s library guide can be accessed by going to <https://libguides.ntcc.edu/c.php?g=634483>.

Minimum Technology Requirements:

- Regular (daily) access to high speed internet via computer access
- Respondus Web Monitor (\$15), you will register for this in the “Start Course Here” folder
- Wired Webcam with microphone (for monitored test taking and recording projects)
- Word processing software (Word) and presentation software (Power Point)
- Document scanning capability
- Windows Laptop, PC, or MacBook are acceptable. Chromebooks, Tablets, or iPads are not compatible with the learning management system and will not allow full utilization of resources in the course.

Required Computer Literacy Skills:

Computer access is required in this course. Students must be comfortable using Word, opening and reading Excel documents, Power Point viewing, attaching documents in .DOC and .DOCX format, access and use online programs, use an internet browser, performing database searches for articles, Blackboard,

and textbook support websites. Where and when available, automated classroom recording technology will be used to record virtual (Synchronous) activities. Such recordings will only be used to supplement the course(es) in which the recording took place. Please be sure to express concerns regarding synchronous activity recordings to the program director, prior to a virtual activity.

Course Structure and Overview:

This is a sixteen-week online course where students are required to access graded activities on the Blackboard Learning Management System. Students are required to check email frequently, complete online homework, and exams as assigned by the instructor. It is very important students keep up with course materials and assignments when issued by the instructor, as this is not a self-paced class. Students are expected to watch instructional videos, read course textbook, and complete online assignments located in the Learning Management System, Blackboard by the due dates.

SCANS Skills:

Basic Skills: reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematical operations, listening, speaking. Thinking Skills: creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, visualize, knowing how to learn, reasoning. Personal Qualities: responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity and honesty. Resources: time, money, materials and facilities, human resources. Information: acquires, evaluates, organizes, maintains, interprets, and uses computers. Interpersonal: participates in teams, teaches others, serves clients, exercises leadership, negotiates, works with diversity. Systems: understands systems, monitors and corrects performance, improves or designs systems. Technology: works with a variety of technologies. Lectures & Discussions: Didactic: Lecture, Power Point Presentations, Discussion, Case Studies, Videos/DVDs, Worksheets, Presentations, Written Assignments, Computer-based Assignments, Tutorials, and Assessments.

Communications:

***This course uses NTCC Student and Faculty email as the official form of communication. Blackboard Learning System on the NTCC website may also be used in this course.

Student emails and phone calls will be answered within 48 hours. Messages sent after 12:00pm (CST) on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday may not be answered until Monday. If you need information related to a test or assignment, plan ahead and submit your questions well ahead of the due date. Your instructor is not online 24 hours per day, so please allow time for response. Emails must be sent from a NTCC student email account, or they will not be answered. Assignments will not be accepted via email. All assignments should be submitted through Blackboard. Blackboard collaborate, virtual sessions, and the discussion boards are areas that should be used for open questions and conversation. Use private email for information you do not wish to share with everyone. Check in frequently and respond to general conversations. Private e-mail should be used only when you want to converse with someone privately. Group e-mail is seen by all and you will be asked to post information, ideas, opinions, and questions publicly.

As part of an effort to help you develop your professional communication skills, I am instituting a (somewhat) formal email etiquette policy. While in the past I have had a certain amount of patience for email messages that are written in an informal style—that is, without much attention to structure, grammar, spelling, and style—I am quite concerned that your future employer(s) and other professional colleagues will be less tolerant. They may think that if you are that inattentive in your writing, you might be just as careless when you are interacting with families as well. (For example, please read [this article](#))

Therefore, when you send me an email, please make every attempt to follow my recommended guidelines for acceptable email etiquette:

- Use a properly descriptive subject line that consists of the course number (“MRTS 1271”) followed by a very brief phrase that summarizes the subject of your message, such as “Homework 1,

Problem 2” or “Appointment request.” Please refrain from using short, nonspecific subject lines that have little to do with the actual message (like “hi,” “class,” “Comp Bio,” “python,” “question,” “help,” or just leaving the subject line blank.)

- Start the body of your email off with a proper greeting, such as “Hello Mrs. Calhoun,” or something similar. (As a side benefit, this prevents you from accidentally addressing me by my first name)
- Please make sure you know the difference between they’re, their, and there. Similarly, make sure you know when to use it’s versus its, your versus you’re, and to, two, and too. (There are people who write entire books to convey the wrath and fury they feel when they see examples of such abominations of punctuation and spelling.)
- Please capitalize the first letter in each sentence, not the entire sentence.

To encourage you to get in the habit of better email etiquette, my plan is as follows: If I receive an email message from you that does not make a sincere attempt to follow the recommendations outlined above, I may respond with a “canned” (pre-written) message that will politely ask you to rewrite your email and send again. It doesn’t have to be perfect (even I screw up sometimes), but assuming you made a decent attempt to do the right thing, then I will much more likely to provide an actual, personal, and timely response.

Institutional/Course Policy:

Strong attendance is imperative to successful learning. Being that this is an online course, attendance is counted through exams, assignments, discussion boards and quizzes. Make sure to log in at least three times a week to check for new materials and announcements.

Late work will not be accepted in any Funeral Service course, unless discussed with the instructor of record, prior to submission. If an assignment is turned in late, with the permission of the instructor, 10% of the total possible points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. Students will have five days to submit late work, on the fifth day the paper will be docked 50% of the grade, following the 10% per day policy. After the fifth day, late work will no longer be accepted.

It is the goal of the funeral service faculty to have all grades and feedback returned to students within one week of the assignment due date. On occasion certain types of assignments (i.e. projects and essays) may take longer to grade and return. Your instructor will inform you when to expect a delay in returned grades. The CURRENT AVERAGE posted in the Blackboard course site is a calculated grade that represents your current course grade average based on the work you have turned in. It will not calculate correctly if you have missed assignments that have not been filled in with a zero.

Attendance is crucial due to the nature of this course. Success in this course is dependent on your active participation and engagement throughout the course. As such, students are required to complete all assignments by the due date, and to actively participate in class discussions.

Additionally, students are expected to:

- Log on at least three times a week – on different days in order to completely weekly assignments, assessments, discussions and/or other weekly deliverables as directed by the instructor and outlined in the syllabus;
- Participate in the weekly threaded discussions, this means that, in addition to posting a response to the thread topic presented, students are expected to respond to each other and comment and questions from the instructor and/or other students;
- Check NTCC’s student email regularly, as this is the primary method of communication in the Funeral Service program.

** Students enrolled in Funeral Service courses which include external learning experiences (Internships) are required to comply with the program dress code. A copy of this dress code can be found in the documents section in your Student Portfolio. It is suggested (and in some cases required) by the Funeral

Service program that students purchase personal protective equipment for courses in which exposure to biohazards exist. Please refer to the Funeral Service Student Handbook for specific policies.

For students in this course who may have a criminal background, please be advised that the background could keep you from being licensed by the state in which you plan to practice. If you have a question about your background and licensure, please speak with your faculty member or the department chair. You also have the right to request a criminal history evaluation letter from the applicable licensing agency.

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure and/or Alternate Course Delivery Requirements:

In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Northeast Texas Community College to move to altered operations. During this time, Northeast Texas Community College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to, online through the Blackboard Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor NTCC's website (<http://www.ntcc.edu/>) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, Blackboard for each class for course-specific communication, and NTCC email for important general information.

Additionally, there may be instances where a course may not be able to be continued in the same delivery format as it originates (face-to-face, fully online, live remote, or hybrid). Should this be the case, every effort will be made to continue instruction in an alternative delivery format. Students will be informed of any changes of this nature through email messaging and/or the Blackboard course site.

NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:

NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

ADA Statement:

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special populations page on the NTCC website.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education

institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

SEE COURSE CALENDAR ON NEXT PAGE

Tentative Course Timeline

(*note* instructor reserves the right to adjust this timeline at any point in the term):

This calendar is a “flexible” guideline that is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion

Class Week	Month	Dates	Readings*	Topics/Notes	Assignments Due
1	JAN	17-23	BB	Start Course Here (SCH) Folder	Respondus Exam (50 Points) D.E.A.D. Registration (10 Points)
2	JAN	24-30	NBERFS pp. 4 – 17 BB	Sociology/History	D.E.A.D. Drill #1 (30 Points) Exam #1 Sociology/History (100 Points)
3	JAN/ FEB	31-6	NBERFS pp. 18 – 30 BB	Psychology/Counseling Mandatory Graduate Virtual Meeting Tuesday, January 31, 2023 7:00 PM (CST)	D.E.A.D. Drill #2 (30 Points) Exam #2 Psychology/Counseling (100 Points) Graduate Meeting (50 Points)
4	FEB	7-13	NBERFS pp. 31 – 70 BB	Funeral Directing/ Contemporary Practices	D.E.A.D. Drill #3 (30 Points)
5	FEB	14-20	BB	Funeral Directing/ Contemporary Practices	D.E.A.D. Drill #4 (30 Points) Exam #3 Funeral Directing / Contemporary Practices (100 Points)
6	FEB	21-27	NBERFS pp. 71 – 131 BB	Law	D.E.A.D. Drill #5 (30 Points)
7	FEB/ MAR	28-6	BB	Law	D.E.A.D. Drill #6 (30 Points)
8	MAR	7-13	NBERFS pp. 132 – 159 BB	Ethics/ FTC	D.E.A.D. Drill #7 (30 Points) Exam #4 Law/Ethics (100 Points)

****SPRING BREAK MARCH 13-17, 2023****

9	MAR	21-27	NBERFS pp. 160 – 177 BB	Marketing/Merchandising	D.E.A.D. Drill #8 (30 Points)
10	MAR- APR	28-3	BB	Marketing/Merchandising	D.E.A.D. Drill #9 (30 Points) Exam #5 Marketing/Merchandising (100 Points)
11	APR	4-10	NBERFS pp. 178 – 199 BB	Accounting/ Computers	D.E.A.D. Drill #10 (30 Points) Exam #6 Accounting/ Computers (100 Points)
LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES WITH A “W” – Thursday, April 20th, 2023					
12	APR	11-17	NBERFS pp. 200 – 212 BB	Management	D.E.A.D. Drill #11 (30 Points) Exam #7 Management (100 Points)
13	APR	18-24	NBERFS pp. 213 – 225 BB	Cemetery/Crematory	D.E.A.D. Drill #12 (30 Points) Exam #8 Cemetery/Crematory (100 Points)
14	APR - MAY	25-1	BB	NBE - Arts Practice	D.E.A.D. Drill #13 (30 Points)
15	MAY	2-8	BB	NBE – Arts Prep NBE - Arts Practice	NBE Practice Exam - Arts (100Points)
16	MAY	9-11	BB	FINAL EXAM- Comprehensive	Final Exam (100 Points) National Board Exam (500 Points)

Spring Graduation ~ May 13, 2023 @ 11:00 am (CST)

Textbook Key:

D.E.A.D. = Death Education Assessment Drill Access

NBERFS = National Board Exam Review for Funeral Service

BB = Blackboard Resources