
COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE *of Funeral Service*



Student Handbook *2011 – 2012*

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BOARD OF REGENTS

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Funeral Director, Past President of the National Funeral Directors Association

SUMNER JAMES WARNING, III, MEMBER

Funeral Director, Service Corporation International

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President/Chief Executive Officer

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Dean of Academics

CHRISTOPHER C. LAYTON
Dean of Students

FACULTY & STAFF

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JESSIKA JENKINS.....Director of Student Services

MARANDA LEITZ.....Admissions Specialist

LISA & BRAD CONLEY.....Clinical Coordinator

THERISA A. MASSEY.....Librarian

JAMES BALL, JR.Instructor: U.S. History

Dr. JOSE CORTES.....Instructor: Biology

GUSTAVE MILBURN, JR......Instructor: College Algebra

JENNAFER SCHNAUTZ.....Instructor: College Algebra

OPHELIA WEBB.....Instructor: General Psychology

QUIANNA GLAPION.....Instructor: English Composition and Rhetoric

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service. Your success during your tenure at Commonwealth Institute is based on a partnership between the Institute and yourself. Commonwealth Institute will be responsible for providing you with an appropriate learning environment, as well as information and material, to help you become a successful member of the funeral service profession. You are responsible for compliance with the rules and regulations of the Institute, for treating other students, faculty, and staff of Commonwealth Institute with respect and for conducting yourself as a positive member of the funeral service profession.

In order to provide you with a proper learning environment and to meet the objectives of Commonwealth Institute, various rules and regulations exist. This handbook will provide you with those rules and regulations and will supplement policy and procedures outlined in Commonwealth Institute's catalog.

PURPOSE OF THE INSTITUTE

The Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is a vocational, post secondary teaching institution with its primary purpose being to educate individuals interested in the subjects comprising the curriculum for licensure and a career in funeral service.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE

Each program in funeral service education has as its central aim at recognition of the importance of funeral service education personnel as:

- members of a human services profession;
- members of the community in which they serve;
- participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession;
- professional knowledge of and compliant with federal, state, provincial/territorial, and local regulatory guidelines (in the geographic area where they practice); and
- professional sensitivity to the responsibility for public health, safety and welfare in caring for human remains.

Each program has the following objectives:

- To enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession.
 - To educate students in every phase of funeral service, and to help enable them to develop the proficiency and skills necessary for the profession, as defined in the Preamble above.
 - To educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral service profession to the community at large.
 - To emphasize high standards of ethical conduct.
 - To provide a curriculum at the post secondary level of instruction.
 - To encourage student and faculty research in the field of funeral service.
 - To be cognizant of non-traditional students, and help enable achievement of their educational goals through greater avenues of access.
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Section 1 Attendance

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Developing and maintaining a good class attendance record is an important facet of each student's professional development. The Executive Director of the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards has indicated that students with excellent class attendance will score better on the National Board Examination (NBE). Each student is expected to attend all classes as scheduled, on time, and to remain in the classes for their full duration. The student also has the responsibility to complete assigned work, and be present for the examinations at the time they are administered to the entire class.

Commonwealth Institute's attendance policies are based on class hours of absence accumulated during any academic quarter of study. Instructors check and record attendance in each class. To be counted present, the student must be in attendance for the entire period. Absences are not classified as excused or un-excused. The daily attendance is transferred weekly to the Master Attendance Record.

A student enrolled in the Associate of Applied Science Program or the Certificate program that is absent for more than 20% of their scheduled classes in a quarter are eligible to have their enrollment terminated.

Students enrolled under various Veterans' programs or other funding agencies will be required to meet

the requirements for attendance of the sponsoring organization.

APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR AN ATTENDANCE TERMINATION

A student may appeal an attendance termination. Documentation supporting medical or family emergencies must be submitted to the Dean of Academics within three business days of termination notification.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves of absence may be granted in emergency situations and for military service obligation. Leaves of absence may not exceed twelve school days, and only one leave of absence is permitted during a 12 month period. A student requesting a leave of absence must do so in writing. The request must contain the specific start date and return date along with the reason for the requested leave. If a student fails to return from leave as scheduled, then enrollment will be terminated and proper refund will be made in accordance with the refund policy of the Institute. Students who have borrowed under Federal IV Funds should be aware that failing to return from a leave of absence may affect their grace period. Students are responsible to arrange for make-up of class work missed during the leave. This work must be completed prior to the end of the quarter or within two weeks of the return date.

Section 2 General Information

BUILDING, FURNITURE, AND GROUNDS

Students of the Institute take great pride in the care of their building and equipment. Students are reminded that others will follow them in the use of the same buildings and property, and those who follow will appreciate the care that has been given their school.

Students are urged to cooperate to the maximum possible extent in keeping the building and grounds clean. Please do not sit or lie in the hallways. This causes an obstruction to fellow students or visitors to the Institute and could be dangerous in the event of an emergency.

The Institute shares the educational complex at 415 Barren Springs Drive with two other entities, the National Museum of Funeral History and the American Funeral Service Training Center. The main reception area between the school and the training center is reserved for guests of the museum and training center.

SMOKE-FREE BUILDING

The school complex is a smoke-free building. Therefore, smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the building. Smoking is permitted only in

designated areas. Students are asked to dispose of cigarettes in the receptacles provided for them and not on the school grounds.

STUDENT PARKING

Ample student parking is provided on the side and in back of the school complex. The parking lot in front of the building is reserved for museum guests. Automobiles are to be parked only in designated parking spaces. Unauthorized cars parked in handicapped spaces or RESERVED areas, will be towed at the owner's expense. Respectful and lawful driving behavior is expected in the parking lot area. Safe driving, pedestrian courtesy, and noise management (like stereo volume) are expected from all students.

STUDENT LOUNGE

Eating or drinking is permissible in the student lounge ONLY. Food, drink, chewing gum, tobacco and tobacco products are prohibited in all other areas of the building, including the hallways. The student lounge is for student use and will be open during regular business hours. All trash should be disposed of in the containers provided.

STUDENT LOCKERS

Student lockers are provided as a convenience for limited purposes. These lockers belong to Commonwealth Institute. Students have exclusive use of their lockers as to other students, but not to official representatives of the Institute. Administrators and their representatives have a duty and right to inspect student lockers whenever they consider it appropriate. While a specific reason for a locker inspection is not required, the following may result in inspections:

1. Cleanliness and healthy environment.
2. To prevent waste accumulation.
3. Safety, health, welfare and fire prevention.

4. For recovery of stolen or missing property.
5. For prevention of unauthorized, illegal or dangerous items such as weapons, drugs, narcotics, drug paraphernalia or alcohol.

If administrators conduct an unscheduled inspection of a specific locker, the locker will be opened in the presence of two witnesses. Generally, however, reasonable effort will be taken to notify the student in advance, inform him or her of the grounds for the inspection, and allow an opportunity to be present during the inspection.

Students must advise the front office staff as to which locker they are using. Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Commonwealth Institute is open and available to students Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except during designated holidays (see *Calendar*, www.commonwealth.edu). Lecture classes are scheduled Monday through Thursday during the following times:

First Hour.....	8:00 - 8:50 a.m.
Second Hour.....	9:00 - 9:50 a.m.
Third Hour.....	10:00 - 10:50 a.m.
Fourth Hour.....	11:00 - 11:50 a.m.
Fifth Hour.....	12:00 - 1:50 p.m.

**Laboratory sessions for classes may be scheduled from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday. Other times for laboratory session will be determined on an at need basis. Every effort is made to complete lab by 4:30 p.m., however this may vary depending on the individual case.*

CLASS BELL SYSTEM

The Class Bell System at the Institute is as follows: A bell will sound one minute before each class period is to begin. Students will have one minute after the first bell rings to be in their seats so the instructor can take attendance. If an individual is not in their assigned seat, after one minute following the first bell, then the instructor will mark the student absent. A second bell will sound fifty minutes after the first bell to remind the instructor that the allotted class time is over. However, class is not dismissed until the instructor indicates such.

CELLULAR TELEPHONE POLICY

Cellular telephones and/or pagers are strictly prohibited in the classroom. If a violation occurs during an exam, then the instructor will dismiss the student and assign a "0" grade for that exam. Under no circumstances are any electronic devices – cellular phones, cameras, pagers, computers, etc., allowed in the preparation room.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

The telephone in the administrative office is a business phone and is for SCHOOL USE ONLY. The office will not disturb scheduled classes unless the telephone call for the student is an emergency. Messages of an important nature will be posted on the door of the classroom.

At Commonwealth Institute we value you as a student and take care to listen to your suggestions and/or concerns. We have placed a suggestion box in front of the administrative offices for this purpose.

PHOTOCOPYING MACHINE

Students are asked to use the photocopying machine in the hallway for their photocopying needs.

STUDENT ID

Student ID's are to be on students at all times. If a student is asked to show his/her student ID, then he/she should be able to do so without hesitation.

GUESTS/NON-CURRENTLY ENROLLED PERSONS

Students may not invite any non-currently enrolled persons, including children or other family members, to any class without prior approval from the administration. **Visitors must check in/out at the front office and obtain a visitor's badge.**

POSTING ANNOUNCEMENTS IN COMMON AREAS

Bulletin boards are located in the student lounge as well as in both classrooms. They are provided for the posting of announcements of general interest to the student body of Commonwealth Institute. Please clear any items to be posted with the Dean or President prior to posting.

LIBRARY BOOKS

All checked out library books must be turned in prior to final exams. If books are not turned in prior to finals, then the student will not be allowed to take final examinations.

Students will be responsible for all checked out library books. If the books are damaged or lost, then the student will be charged and responsible for paying for the book. Holds will be placed on the student's final grades if the balance is not paid in full.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The National Funeral Service Honor Society is represented on campus. The purpose of the Honor Society is to offer service and leadership to Commonwealth Institute as well as promote academics and fellowship among all students enrolled at Commonwealth. The Honor Society members sponsor study groups, assist as hosts at graduation and college functions and other activities.

TUITION

The amount of tuition and fees can be found in the catalog. The payment policy for tuition is explained in the catalog. The student is responsible for the payment of tuition and fees regardless of any financial assistance that may be involved. The student is required to pay any difference between received financial assistance and tuition by the established due dates set by administration.

A student will not be eligible for quarter finals for any academic quarter of study if all tuition and fees that are due have not been paid. Grades will also not be released if a student has any outstanding balance for tuition or fees. For payment plans refer to the supplement.

Students who leave the Institute owing a tuition balance must pay the balance in full 30 days prior to reenrollment. A payment plan for tuition will not be available for these students therefore; they will have to pay the quarter's tuition in full at the beginning of each quarter.

For checks that are returned a fee of \$50.00 will be added to the balance of the tuition. Students that have checks returned will be required to pay future tuition by cash, money order, or cashier's check. We will no longer accept personal checks for payment of tuition.

For graduating students all tuition must be paid in full 30 days prior to graduation.

Fees for licensure examinations are not included in Commonwealth Institute's charges. The student will be responsible for payment of these fees, to the appropriate agency, when required.

DISCLOSURE OF STUDENT INFORMATION

Commonwealth Institute considers the student's name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, and degree to be directory information and, therefore, available to anyone upon request. If a student wishes to prohibit disclosure of the information, then he or she must complete a non-disclosure form in the Office of the Registrar.

A student is entitled to an official or unofficial transcript of his or her record upon written request by the student. The payment of appropriate fees will be required before the transcript can be given. Each student receives one complimentary copy of the official transcript after graduation.

Documents submitted by the student in support of admission will become part of their permanent file and property of Commonwealth Institute. These documents will not be returned to the student upon graduation or withdraw nor can they be sent to another education facility.

The Institute does not release academic records to parents, or anyone else, without written permission of the student. Academic records are not mailed to other colleges or universities without written permission of the student and payment of appropriate fees if applicable.

Requests from research organizations asking statistical studies may be honored without the student's approval providing no information revealing the student's name will be published.

Accrediting and Governmental Agencies may inspect student records without the student's approval.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY REGARDING STUDENTS

Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service provides equal educational opportunities without regard to race, religion, sex, age, veteran status, handicap or ethnic origin.

The Institute complies with the "Family Educational and Privacy Act of 1974."

LICENSE EXAMINATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to complete the application for the National Board Examination, practice National Board, Texas Law Examination, and any other licensure exams along with the correct fee and within the necessary time frame. Additional information can be found at www.theconferenceonline.org for National Board information and at www.tfsc.state.tx.us for questions about the Texas Law Examination.

Section 3 Student Behavior

PURPOSE

The Institute recognizes that students are both citizens and members of the academic community. Upon enrolling at the Institute, each student assumes an obligation to conduct himself/herself in a manner compatible with Commonwealth's function, missions and goals. Students are expected to obey the penal and civil statutes of local, state and federal government along with Commonwealth Institute's policies, regulations, and administrative rules.

ADVERSE BEHAVIOR

Conduct which adversely affects the student's suitability as a member of the academic community includes but is not limited to the following:

- Harassment of student or employees of Commonwealth Institute whether it be sexual, racial, ethnic, or any other type.
- Respect and maturity from each student enrolled at Commonwealth Institute is expected at all times. Disruptions in the classroom or any place in the facilities will not be tolerated. If such a disruption happens the student may be asked to leave the classroom or the campus and will be expected to do so immediately.
- As a courtesy to other students please do not distract the class by entering late or leaving

while class is in session. If you leave class prior to its completion you will be considered absent. Classes will not be interrupted except for legitimate emergency messages.

- Theft, defacing, damaging or destruction of Commonwealth Institute property. A student is held responsible for the breakage or destruction of classroom and/ or laboratory equipment they are responsible for.
- Please do not sit on the writing surface of the desks, nor deface the desktops by writing on them. Do not place your feet on any of the furniture.
- Inability or unwillingness to work in harmony with other students, faculty, and administration.
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, or other Commonwealth activities.
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of Commonwealth Institute documents, records, identification.
- Theft, fraud, gambling, carrying weapons of any kind or explosives.

- Physical abuse of any person at Commonwealth sponsored, controlled, or supervised activities.
- Riotous behavior such as property destruction, disturbing the peace, or risking bodily injury to students or employees of Commonwealth Institute.
- Disorderly conduct, conducting or expressing oneself in a loud or lewd manner, indecent or obscene conduct or expression on campus or at Commonwealth sponsored or controlled activities.
- Failure to comply with directions of Commonwealth Institute officials acting in the performance of their duties (including uniformed security personnel).
- Conspiring to participate in hazing.
- Fireworks, firearms, ammunition, or weapons of any sort are prohibited on property and/or activities sponsored or controlled by Commonwealth Institute.
- Conviction of a misdemeanor or felony which would jeopardize licensure as a funeral director and/or embalmer.
- Failure to comply with OSHA and/or EPA rules and regulations.
- Unauthorized solicitation and distribution of literature or products. Students must get

permission from the administration prior to posting any notices or distributions of literature or products.

- Physical and/or verbal threats while on Commonwealth Property.
- Academic dishonesty, including but not limited to:
 1. Looking on another student's paper during a test or examination or communicating in any way with anyone other than the test administrator.
 2. Accepting or providing unauthorized assistance in the preparation of assignments or taking of any tests and examinations.
 3. Submitting as your own work essays, term papers, lab reports, or other projects which have been prepared by others.
 4. Plagiarizing (presenting as one's own ideas, data and/or works of another)

A student charged with any of the aforementioned violations, and depending on the severity of the transgression, may be suspended by the President or Dean, pending a hearing on the charges as soon as is practical, when deemed in the best interest of Commonwealth Institute.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USAGE

Computers for student use in the Institute computer lab are for educational purposes only. The Institute monitors computer (including internet) use to determine if violation of any computer usage guidelines, posted in the computer lab, exist. Students may jeopardize their academic standing if violations are committed. Computers are allowed in the classroom; however, your full attention is expected while in class. You may use your laptop computer in the classroom to take notes and review course materials unless instructed otherwise. **You may not surf the web, read email, or "chat" while in class.** Students who abuse this privilege will not be allowed to use their computers in class and will have their participation grade reduced.

SECURITY OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

The Institute cannot be responsible for personal property or assume responsibility for the protection of vehicles and their contents. The Institute recommends that students conceal books, supplies, and other valuables in the trunks of their cars, or in an area out of sight, or keep valuables in their possession at all times. Items such as purses, handbags, book bags, and knapsacks should not be left unattended.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles should be taken to the front office. Articles found and left with the front office will be inventoried, dated, and held for a period of forty-five days. During this time these articles may be claimed upon proof of ownership. After forty-five days the Institute will automatically dispose of unclaimed articles.

COMMENCEMENT

The administration and staff at Commonwealth Institute of Funeral Service believe very strongly

that Commencement must be a dignified ceremony. Commencement exercises are optional. If students choose to participate, they must follow school guidelines and they will be held accountable for any violation. Candidates for graduation are expected to conduct themselves in a decent, respectful and civilized manner during Commencement activities.

This includes:

- Arriving on time (at least 15 minutes prior to the start, if not sooner). Once the processional has started, no student will be allowed to enter the procession.
- Wearing all academic regalia (cap and gown) until the end of the event and the recessional has ended.
- Refraining from disruptive behavior during Commencement. Yelling, talking, walking out, use of cellular devices, chewing gum, etc. is prohibited. The use of alcohol or other mind altering substances is strictly prohibited. If it is even suspected that you may be under the influence, you will be asked to leave immediately from the premises.
- Being respectful and attentive to all speakers throughout the program.

COMMENCEMENT DRESS CODE

Graduating students are expected to reflect the image of the Institute in the attire that is worn during the Commencement Ceremony. Students wearing jeans, t-shirts, shorts, sneakers or flip-flops will **not** be allowed to participate in the Commencement Ceremony.

It is suggested that at a minimum, business casual attire be worn. After all, it is expected that candidates understand the importance of presentation as you are about to enter the field of funeral service. **Prescribed dress code is: Male - dress shirt, tie and slacks, dark dress shoe. Female - dresses or slacks and dress shoes**

Section 4 Dress Code

PURPOSE

The Institute adopts the dress code to comply with its responsibility of upholding and promoting the values of funeral service to its students. The intent of this policy is to assist students in making choices in personal grooming and apparel which will be acceptable and appropriate for a professional school setting. Every student contributes to the Institute's image. While students will have the right to personal preferences in dress, the overall image will be one of professionalism. The Institute reserves the right to restrict dress for legitimate reasons relating to safety, hygiene or environmental conditions.

The Institute expects you to take pride in your personal appearance. Personal grooming and a businesslike appearance are vital to each student's success. It is not the intent of the policy to be overly restrictive; it is designed to promote safety, order, and decency and to stress good grooming so that each individual student may be proud of his/her own appearance, as well as the appearance of the entire student body.

General Rules:

Sunglasses are not to be worn in the building. Hats or caps are not to be worn in the building, laboratories, or classrooms.

On days of field trips and/or guest lectures, students are expected to dress in the mode of contemporary funeral service practitioners. If the dress is not appropriate the student will not be allowed to participate and will be marked absent for the time missed.

Female students dress- Dresses or suits, slacks, pant-suits, and dress or polo shirt. Proper dress shoes are expected. The following **is not** permitted: jeans, sandals, exposed mid-riffs, low-cut blouses, t-shirts, shorts, Capri pants, wind or sweat suits.

Male students- Suits, sport coat or jacket, dress or sport trousers, dress or polo shirt, socks and shoes. The following **is not** permitted: jeans, sandals, t-shirts, muscle shirts, shorts, wind or sweat suits.

Tattoos must be covered along with no or covered exotic piercing. No exotic hairdos. Scrubs may be worn on the student's scheduled lab day.

Certain clothing is considered unacceptable and will not be permitted at the Institute. The aforementioned list is not inclusive; therefore a student may be informed by administration if their dress is not acceptable. Business casual attire is preferred.

Section 5 Embalming Lab Program

PURPOSE

The embalming program at Commonwealth Institute is unique to any other such program in the country. At the Institute, students not only participate in the embalming process of human remains, but also cosmetize, dress, casket and voluntarily participate in the funeral service under the Indigent Burial Program through Harris County. During his/her tenure, the student is required to actively participate in the embalming of ten (10) human remains.

- Scheduling: Each student is required to work in the embalming lab a total of two quarters. Students are not scheduled for embalming lab in their first quarter of study in order for them to gain a theoretical background in Occupational Safety and Anatomy before they enter the clinical embalming program.
- Laboratory Time: The embalming lab is open from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or until the last case has been completed. At the beginning of the 2nd Specialized Quarter, students will select their lab day and work on a rotating team basis. Two teams of five students will be available from Monday to Friday.
- Coordination: Each day the embalming lab instructor will announce the number of cases for embalming. No more than 5 students will be assigned to an embalming case.
- Embalming Process: The embalming process will vary from case to case but several essential elements will be covered for each case. They are as follows:

1. Case Analysis to be conducted by the embalming instructor with input from the students.
 2. Students will choose the embalming fluid, solution strength, index, and modifying agents with the approval of the embalming instructor.
 3. Students will perform embalming under constant supervision of the embalming instructor.
 4. Utmost respect for the deceased will be conducted.
 5. Professionalism at all times.
 6. The highest degree of concern for the safety of all.
 7. Constant concern for cleanliness, disinfection and health procedures.
 8. Complete terminal disinfection of the decedent and work area.
 9. A strict duty of confidentiality will be held by the student throughout his/her academic career. The details of any embalming case or the decedent are strictly prohibited.
 10. A maximum of five (5) students will work together on each case.
- Student Embalming Reports: The embalming instructor retains a student embalming report for each student which keeps track of all casework performed in the embalming lab. Each student is required to fill out his/her embalming report after completion of each case that he/she actively participated in. The report contains all aspects of the embalming process.

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- **Safety:** A primary concern of the Institute is the safety of our students who are working on the embalming lab. Students are advised to consult with their personal physician concerning preventative vaccinations and any susceptibility testing. Health services are not provided by the Institute; however, students are directed to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services (www.dshs.state.tx.us), Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (www.dshs.state.tx.us) or any local immunization clinic for further assistance in seeking proper vaccinations.
 - **Dress Code:** To assure the safety of all students while embalming the following articles of clothing are mandatory. Long pants, preferably jeans, slacks or scrubs; no shorts, Capri pants or short skirts and closed-toe-shoes, preferably leather tennis shoes worn with socks. Hair longer than shoulder length should be pulled up in a clip or ponytail. Excessive jewelry is not permitted, including dangling earrings or necklaces, heavy chains, noisy bracelets, or large rings. All students are required to wear personal protective equipment which is furnished by Commonwealth and included in the fee for tuition.

backpacks, purses, keys, cell phones, recording devices, pagers, etc.

HEALTH SERVICES

Health services are not provided by the Institute; however, students are encouraged to seek immunization assistance from the Texas Department of Health Services (www.dshs.state.tx.us), Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services (www.dshs.state.tx.us) or any local immunization clinic. Harris County Clinics in our area are as follows:

Humble Health Clinic - 1730 Humble Place Drive
Phone: (281) 446-4222
Hours: Monday - 7:30-11:00 a.m. & 1:00 -6:00 p.m.
Tues. – Thurs. 7:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
Friday -8:00 – 11:00 AM

Antoine Health Clinic - 5815 Antoine, Suite A
Phone: (713) 602-3300
Hours: Mon.-Wed.-Thurs. & Fri. - 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Tues.- 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

We have available upon request an educational pamphlet on HIV and Aids developed by the Texas Department of Health.

Students are not allowed to take any personal items into the preparation room, such as

Section

6

Policy Against Harassment & Discrimination

PURPOSE

It is the policy of the Institute to maintain learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, sexual harassment, and/or age discrimination. The Institute prohibits any form of religious, racial, sexual harassment and/or age discrimination.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, third party (present on the premises) or Institute personnel to harass a student, teacher, administrator, or Institute personnel through conduct or communication be it of a sexual nature, regarding religion, race, or age discrimination as defined by this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, third party (present on the premises) or other Institute personnel to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial, or sexual harassment or age discrimination upon any student, teacher, administrator, or other college personnel.

The Institute will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial or sexual harassment, or age discrimination, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, or other Institute personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illegal drugs or controlled substance by Commonwealth Institute students on property, or as part of any Commonwealth Institute activities is strictly prohibited.
- The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol by students on Commonwealth Institute property, or as part of any Commonwealth Institute activities is strictly prohibited. Violation of this policy will result in suspension or expulsion from the Institute.
- Institute standards do not allow alcoholic beverages, including empty alcohol containers, on campus.
- Possession of drug-related paraphernalia is considered a violation of this policy.
- Additionally, being under the influence of illicit drugs and/or alcohol is considered a violation of this policy. Intoxication on campus or at Institute-sponsored events is prohibited.

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- Commonwealth Institute is recognized by Texas Health & Safety Code §481.134 as a Drug-Free Zone. Commonwealth Institute is also within 1000 yards of a public elementary school.
 - Commonwealth Institute recognizes its responsibility to maintain and support civil laws and therefore will cooperate fully with the law enforcement agencies by providing information and assisting in the prosecution of illegal use, possession, distribution and sale of illegal drugs.
 - May affect financial aid.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

- The Higher Education Amendment of 1998 (H.R.6, Sec.952) permits higher education institutions to notify parents or legal guardian when a student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance and the student is under the age of

21. When the consequences for violations of the alcohol and drug policy indicate that a student's parents will be notified, a copy of the student's disciplinary letter citing the infraction and consequences for the infraction will be sent to a student's legal home permanent address.

SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE SANCTIONS

- Censure/Disciplinary Reprimand - Verbal warning or written notification to a student that he/she has violated an Institute rule or policy and that subsequent wrongful conduct will not be tolerated and may result in more severe disciplinary actions.
- Restitution - Reimbursement for damages to or misappropriation of property and/or compensation for injury. This may take the form of appropriate service or other compensation.

- Dismissal/Suspension - Termination of student status for an indefinite period. A Dismissed/suspended student may not re-enroll at Commonwealth Institute unless and until his or her readmission is specifically approved by the President. Readmission after dismissal may be granted only under exceptional circumstances.
- Revocation of Degree – A student’s degree may be revoked if it was obtained by fraud. If a degree is revoked, the student is barred from returning to Commonwealth Institute.
- Expulsion – A student may be dismissed from the Institute permanently. When a student is expelled from the Institute, the student may not re-apply for readmission.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (RIGHT TO APPEAL)

The Institute has established a grievance procedure to be used by students of Commonwealth to ensure their right to due process. This right to due process is administered without regard to race, creed, national origin, or sex. The grievance must be submitted in writing to the Institute within 30 days of the event. Failure to file any grievance within the specified time periods shall be deemed a waiver thereof.

The Dean or designee shall investigate the alleged grievance, and an attempt will be made to resolve the matter informally with the parties involved.

A member of the Institute’s administration (President or Dean of Academics) shall serve as the

hearing officer and may resolve the matter of alleged violation through an informal hearing. The legal rules of evidence do not apply at the informal hearing. Evidence that possesses probative value and is commonly accepted by reasonable people in the conduct of the affairs may be admitted. The student is presumed innocent of the alleged violation unless the hearing officer is convinced by the evidence that the student is guilty of the violation. The hearing officer may impose one of more of the following penalties, if the student is found guilty of the alleged violation: suspension of eligibility for extracurricular activities, letter of warning, suspension for up to the remainder of the current quarter, restitution for damages, denial of degree, or permanent severance from Commonwealth Institute.

A student is entitled to appeal the decision of the Dean or hearing officer of the informal hearing to the President of Commonwealth Institute. The President shall review the matter and render the final decision in a timely manner.

No reprisal of any kind will be taken by the Board, an administrator, or an employee of Commonwealth Institute against any person bringing a grievance under this procedure.

Any grievances unresolved by Commonwealth Institute may be forwarded to the Texas Workforce Commission, Proprietary Schools, 101 East 15th Street, Austin, TX 78778-0001, (512) 936-3100.

WHO TO ASK

If you have questions or concerns about a particular course, then please consult the course instructor first. If there are other issues that arise please consult the following individuals.

- Admission and transcript questions.....Patricia A. Moreno, Registrar
- Tuition payment questions.....Patricia A. Moreno, Registrar
- Financial Aid questions.....Jessika Jenkins, Director of Student Services
- Attendance questions.....Christopher C. Layton, Dean of Students
- Clinical Embalming Program questions.....Stuart Moen, Dean of Academics

PLEASE NOTE: The contents of this handbook, all or in part are subject to change without notice. The information contained within this Student Handbook is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. All students should review and become familiar with the College Catalog and Supplement as well as the handbook. Failure to read the Student Handbook does not excuse students from the policies and procedures described herein.

J. Chandler Altieri

J. Chandler Altieri, President

Effective January 1995; Revised August 1996, February 1997, May 1997, August 1997, February 1997, May 1997, August 1997, February 1998, August 1998, August 1999, May 2000, August 2001, November 2001, August 2002, February 2003, January 2004, April 2004, July 2004, June 2005, September 2005, December 2006, March 2010, June 2010, September 2011.
