

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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# **SIAS, funeral council launch program**

*Certificate program to be delivered through distance education, work-based training*

**May 26, 2005** – SIAS and the Funeral and Cremation Services Council of Saskatchewan (FCSCS) announced the launch today of a new certificate program that will be offered across Saskatchewan beginning this fall. The 40-week Funeral Service program will provide training to students pursuing careers either as funeral directors or embalmers.

“The council was delighted that SIAS, an accredited and nationally recognized post-secondary institution, accepted our invitation to develop this new program,” says Bill Edwards, chair of the Funeral and Cremation Services Council of Saskatchewan.

“Graduates will be well-prepared to provide professional funeral services in their communities,” Edwards said, “and because the program will be delivered through distance education, they will be able to pursue their training without leaving those communities.”

“Consulting with employers on program development is a SIAS hallmark,” says Claude Naud, SIAS’s vice president, programs, “it ensures that their needs are met and that students graduate with instantly marketable skills.” Delivering the Funeral Service program through distance education similarly serves both students and employers, Naud added, and is consistent with SIAS’s commitment to maximize accessibility to programming.

The Funeral Service certificate program includes courses in topics ranging from the psychology of grief to accounting. In addition to course work, each specialty – funeral director and embalmer – includes eight-weeks of work-based training. Upon successfully completing all aspects of the program, students will be prepared to write a licensing exam for practice in Saskatchewan.

Applications to the Funeral Service program will be accepted on a first-qualified, first-admitted basis starting June 6, 2005. The program has a capacity of 15 students.

SIAS is Saskatchewan’s primary public institution for post-secondary technical

education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. Almost 12,000 students are registered in SIAST programs, which touch every sector of the economy; additionally, the organization draws more than 27,000 individual course registrations. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

The Funeral and Cremation Services Council of Saskatchewan was created by legislation, November 1, 2001. It is responsible for the education, licensing and regulating of funeral directors, embalmers and salespersons in the province and establishing educational, competency and service standards.

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