From:	Gary Brown
To:	Scotece, Tanya; Beckham, Howard R.
Cc:	V. Todd Ferreira; Kevin Davis; Corinne Mixon; Juhan Mixon; Luke Grabowski; Schwantes, Mary; Chris Jensen; Jill Peeples
Subject:	Re: Miami Dade College Perspective & Scotece lens
Date:	Tuesday, October 27, 2026 7:45:26 PM
Attachments:	image.png image.png

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Good evening, Howard and colleagues,

Thank you both for sharing your perspectives on this important issue.

I would like to echo the concerns regarding the academic challenges students face when attempting to balance their educational responsibilities with internship obligations. Internships are essentially full-time positions, and the demands frequently extend well beyond a 40-hour workweek, particularly when funeral homes experience increased case volumes. Unfortunately, these busy periods often seem to coincide with midterm and final examinations, when students need to devote additional time to their academic responsibilities.

For this reason, at St. Petersburg College, we generally do not encourage students to begin their internships until they are nearing the completion of Practicum or have successfully completed the National Board Examination, depending on their individual academic strengths and ability to manage competing responsibilities. We believe students are better served by prioritizing their academic preparation and examination readiness before assuming the considerable demands of a full-time internship.

I appreciate Howard’s efforts to improve the internship framework and agree that we should carefully consider how internship requirements affect student success while ensuring graduates receive meaningful practical training.

Thank you both for contributing to this important discussion.

Gary J. Brown, LFD, MA
Program Director, Funeral Services
St. Petersburg College | HEC
727-341-3783 | brown.gary@spcollege.edu
Program Website




From: Scotece, Tanya <tscotece@mdc.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2026 8:52 AM
To: Beckham, Howard R. <howard.beckham@fscj.edu>
Cc: Gary Brown <Brown.Gary@spcollege.edu>; V. Todd Ferreira <vtoddf@gmail.com>; Kevin Davis <Davis.Kevin@spcollege.edu>; Corinne Mixon <corinne@rutledge-ecenia.com>; Juhan Mixon <jmixon@ifdf.org>; Luke Grabowski <lgrabowski@penningtonlaw.com>; Mary Schwantes <mary.schwantes@myfloridacfo.com>; Chris Jensen <cejsouth@gmail.com>; Jill Peeples <jill@pffh.com>
Subject: Re: Miami Dade College Perspective & Scotece lens

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Good morning everyone,

Howard, thank you for the considerable time and effort you have devoted to developing this proposal. I appreciate your willingness to examine the existing internship framework and identify opportunities for greater consistency, accountability, and clarity.

After reviewing the proposal and reflecting on our conversation last week, I would like to offer a perspective from the educational side, particularly as it relates to student success, academic preparation, and the consistency of practical training.

At Miami Dade College, approximately 95% of our Funeral Service Education program is delivered in person. Consequently, our students must balance substantial classroom and laboratory requirements with their employment and internship responsibilities.

One of our ongoing challenges is that students completing internships frequently cite their work obligations as reasons for missing classes or being unable to participate fully in academic activities. This concern is not exclusive to in-person instruction. Even in an online environment, students

may struggle to remain academically engaged while managing demanding work schedules.

Attempting to complete a rigorous academic program while simultaneously fulfilling a 40-hour-per-week internship creates competing priorities. When students are financially dependent on their employment, academic responsibilities can become secondary. This may ultimately affect academic performance, progression, examination readiness, and institutional outcomes, including National Board Examination pass rates.

Another significant concern is the inconsistency of internship experiences across training establishments. Although students are theoretically expected to receive comparable training, the actual quality of instruction, supervision, case exposure, and opportunities for meaningful participation may differ substantially.

Equally concerning is the potential for inaccurate or falsified internship documentation. While I appreciate the additional reporting and verification measures outlined in this proposal, I question whether requiring more detailed records necessarily ensures that the documented experiences actually occurred.

A supervisor's signature may verify that a report was submitted, but how do we independently establish that the student performed the activities described or demonstrated the competencies being certified?

I believe this warrants further discussion, particularly when internship completion is an essential component of professional licensure and public protection as it stands now. However, I am open to exploring other options for Florida licensure.

I also would like to further investigate whether we should examine experiential learning models utilized in other professional education programs, such as nursing, where structured clinical experiences are incorporated into the curriculum and aligned with defined educational outcomes.

I am certainly not suggesting that practical experience should be eliminated but perhaps re-evaluated. I do question whether the current structure could be strengthened through greater collaboration between educational institutions and approved training establishments, with more direct

educational oversight, consistent competency assessments, and meaningful verification of practical experiences.

I recognize that recent legislative changes have expanded internship eligibility and that any regulatory modifications must remain consistent with Chapter 497. However, I believe we should carefully consider the educational implications of allowing students to undertake substantial internship obligations while still completing their academic programs.

Ultimately, I believe the central question is whether we are measuring meaningful professional competency or primarily documenting hours and activities that may not accurately reflect the student's actual experience.

I would welcome hearing how other institutions are addressing these challenges and whether a more integrated approach to experiential learning might better serve our students, the profession, and the families they will eventually serve.

Thank you again, Howard, for initiating this important discussion.

Kind regards,
-Tanya

Tanya Scotece, Ph.D., LFD
Program Coordinator
tscotece@mdc.edu
Funeral Service Education Program
Miami Dade College
North Campus
11380 NW 27th Ave,
Miami, FL 33167

> On Oct 22, 2026, at 9:22 PM, Beckham, Howard R. <howard.beckham@fscj.edu> wrote:
>
> ********** EXTERNAL EMAIL **********
> PLEASE USE CAUTION WHEN CLICKING LINKS OR ATTACHMENTS
>
> Hello all,
>
> Since I will be leaving to head to the NFDA Annual Conference meeting in Charlotte, N.C. Early Saturday morning and will not be back until late next week, I wanted to at least put an idea on the table for thought and discussion. The

attorneys in the room may find a boatload of reasons why I am certifiable, but I will bet that there may be a funeral director or two who might see what I am putting on the table for consideration. I would love to hear from any of you about this idea.

Best regards,

Howard R. Beckham, Jr.

Howard R. Beckham, Jr., BS, MA, CFSP, CCO, CCS
Funeral Services Program Director and Professor

4501 Capper Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32218
Office# 904-766-6622
Cell # 904-669-7796 (this is the best contact phone number)

- " Never underestimate the power of your voice and the impact that you can have on the world when you speak up for what you believe in." --- Charlie Kirk

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