Nebraska Department of Correctional Services

Site Visit Report

Description of Training Organization

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) Training Academy provides basic and advanced training to correctional personnel in the State of Nebraska. The pre-service training program provides training to individuals seeking certification as corrections officers in the State of Nebraska. The Director of the State Department of Correctional Services oversees seven offices:
• Legal
• Planning, Research & Accreditation
• Medical Administration, which includes Health Services, Medical Services Delivery, Mental Health, Psychiatric, and Substance Abuse
• Administrative Services, which includes Accommodations Coordinator, Accounting, Budget, Cornhusker State Industries, Engineering, Human Resources, Information Systems, Purchasing, Safety/Sanitation, and Special Services
• Institutions, which includes Emergency Preparedness, Diagnostic & Evaluation Center, Hastings Correctional Center, Lincoln Correctional Center, Nebraska Correctional Center for Women, Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility, Nebraska State Penitentiary, Omaha Correctional Center, and Tecumseh State Correctional Institution
• Programs & Community Services, which includes Central Records, Community Corrections Center – Lincoln, Community Corrections Center – Omaha, Work Ethic Camp, Parole Administration, and Programs

Human Resources include Organizational Development and Staff Training and Development. Staff Training and Development includes the Staff Training Academy.

The department’s total work force, including commissioned personnel, technical, clerical, supervisory, and administrative positions, is 2,200. The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services is funded by appropriations of the Nebraska State Legislature with a total budget of $131 million (Fiscal Year July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004). The total work force of the Staff Training Academy is eight and the annual budget is $671,304 (Fiscal Year July 1, 2003-June 30, 2004).

Source of Official Student Records

In order to award credit, colleges and universities require proof of completion of coursework issued by the training organization. A student who has completed training provided by the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Staff Training Academy may obtain such records of this training by contacting:

Staff Training Academy
Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
PO Box 95661
Lincoln, NE 68509

Description of Training Programs

Location: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy: Lincoln, NE
Length: 4 weeks (160 hours)
Program Objective: To provide participants with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to serve effectively at the entry level as corrections personnel in the State of Nebraska.
Learning Objective: Upon successful completion of this program, the graduate will be able to perform all routine duties of corrections personnel in the State of Nebraska.
Instructional Methods: A combination of lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint, video and handouts), class exercises, group exercises, and practical exercises are used.
Learning Assessments: Written and practical examinations are used.

Description of Team

Three assessment consultants and one Criminal Justice Training Assessment coordinator were on the team. Below is a list of all participants; CJTA and Excelsior College have full curriculum vitae on file for each.

Chris Schreck, PhD
Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice Sciences
Department of Criminal Justice Sciences
College of Applied Sciences
Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois

Michael McGreevy, JD, MS
Professor of Criminal Justice
Department of Criminal Justice
Division of Social Science
Dakota Wesleyan University
Mitchell, South Dakota

Ann Jones, EdD
Regional Training Coordinator
Training Academy
South Carolina Department of Corrections
Columbia South Carolina

Timothy Birch, MS
Assessment Coordinator
Criminal Justice Training Assessment
Albany, New York

Description of Visit

From September 22 to September 23, 2003, the above four representatives of Excelsior College conducted a site visit to the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy to assess the educational programs offered by the academy.

On the first morning (Monday, September 22, 2003), the team assembled at the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy. Following a brief organizational meeting and introductions to Ken Sturdy, Director, the assessment team was shown to its conference room headquarters to begin the assessment process.

The team determined that the remainder of the day would be spent organizing the various subject modules of the recruit training program into familiar college course content areas. Before finishing for the day, the course areas were discussed and then assigned to a specific faculty member for review to begin the next day.
Assistant Professor Schreck reviewed material for the following courses: Introduction to Basic Corrections. Professor McGreevy reviewed material for the following courses: Correctional Policy and Procedure. Doctor Jones reviewed material for the following courses: Basic Correctional Practices I, and Basic Correctional Practices II. The above list of courses was developed from a list of subjects included in the pre-service training program of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy.

The team began September 23, 2003 by continuing to review the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy materials and concluded this review by mid-morning. The team completed its review of program materials and discussed the credit recommendations with Ken Sturdy, Director of Staff Training.

Credit Recommendations

Summary of Credit Recommendations

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<th>Program</th>
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<td>Pre-Service Training</td>
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Basic Correctional Practices I (1 credit, lower division)

Program: Pre-Service Training curriculum

Location: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy, Lincoln, NE

Length: 18.5 hours

Dates: September 1998 through June 2009

Objectives: Using a nationally recognized defensive driving course material, demonstrate appropriate understanding of safe driving. List and explain the purpose of writing accurate reports. Write two reports based on narrative reporting forms using the five elements of successful report writing. Establish and perform proper procedures for responding to a medical emergency within a prison. Develop the knowledge and skills to provide basic care for injuries and sudden illness.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: three-and-a-half hours of “Defensive Driving,” seven hours of “Report Writing,” and eight hours of “CPR/First Aid/AED.” Instructional methods include lecture, self-directed study, and practical exercises. Evaluation methods include written examination, written reports, and demonstrated performance proficiency.

Credit Recommendation: In the lower division associate/baccalaureate degree category, one semester credit.

Basic Correctional Practices II (3 credits, lower division)

Program: Pre-Service Training curriculum

Location: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy, Lincoln, NE

Length: 57.5 hours

Dates: September 1998 through June 2009

Objectives: Demonstrate the proper handling of agency firearms and demonstrate proficiency on rifles and shotguns. Demonstrate the proper use of unarmed self defense for self-protection and techniques for controlling inmates. Understand and apply the proper technique for moving an inmate from a cell using controlled force. Utilizing appropriate search and seizure techniques in practical exercises, conduct searches of persons, vehicles, and rooms. Demonstrate the appropriate response for handling contraband. Explain the history, effects, toxicity, and decontamination procedures for chemical agents. Develop an understanding of the procedures for transporting inmates and the proper use of restraint equipment.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: twenty-four hours of “Firearms,” twenty one and one-half hours of “Level III Subject Control,” two hours of “Forced Cell Movement,” five hours of “Searches,” one hour of “Chemical Agents,” and four hours of “Restraints/Transportation.” Instructional methods include lecture and practical exercise. Evaluation methods include weekly written examinations with a comprehensive final examination and performance examination demonstrating competency.

Credit Recommendation: In the lower division associate/baccalaureate degree category, three semester credits.

Correctional Policy and Procedure (3 credits, lower division)

Program: Pre-Service Training

Location: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy, Lincoln, NE

Length: 40 hours

Dates: September 1998 through June 2009

Objectives: Familiarize students with the personnel/human resource issues of the Department; this encompasses a wide range of subjects such as employee identification, probation, evaluation, termination, etc. Explain discrimination and harassment and the procedure for handling grievances. Understand the Department’s policy on the use of force and better enable the student to understand and control potentially dangerous situations. Develop an understanding of basic legal principles, with an emphasis on those legal rights most often raised by inmates. Learn the content of the Americans with Disabilities Act as well as the laws implication in a correctional setting. Explain the safety and sanitation policies and practices of the Department. Discuss the major disease causing agents and the recommended procedure for protecting one from those agents. Develop an understanding of, and an appreciation of quality performance. Understand the rules and regulations of inmate behavior and the procedure followed with a violation report is filed. Understand the classification of inmates and appreciate the different levels and the effect upon the inmate and the institution. Understand the Restorative Justice philosophy and the role of the Victim’s Advisory Council. Explain the crime scene and the need for preservation of the scene and the collection of evidence. Explain emergency situations and the Department’s plan for dealing with them. Explain the purpose and operations of the Emergency Response Team.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: three hours of “Personnel Issues,” two and one-half hours of “Discrimination and Harassment,” four hours of “Use of Force,” three hours of “Legal Issues,” one hour of “Americans with Disabilities,” one hour of “Safety and Sanitation,” two hours of “Communicable Disease,” two hours of “Quality Initiative,” three hours of “Inmate Rules and Regulations,” three hours of “Classification,” one hour of “Victim Awareness,” one and a half hours of “Crime Scene and Evidence,” twelve hours of “Emergency Preparedness,” and one hour of “Introduction to CERT/SORT/CNT.” Instructional methods include lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint, video, and student handouts). Evaluation methods include written examination and instructor observation.

Credit Recommendation: In the lower division associate/baccalaureate degree category, three semester credits.
Introduction to Basic Corrections (1 credit, lower-division)

Program: Pre-Service Training Program
Location: Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Training Academy, Lincoln, NE
Length: 21.5 hours
Dates: September 1998 through June 2009

Objectives: List and explain the elements of and barriers to effective communication and the various styles of communication found in a correctional setting. Define the role of the Nebraska prison system and the history and philosophy of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services. Explain the concept of ‘Security Threat Groups;’ why inmates join gangs, and describe the consequences of gang infiltration of prisons. Define the concept of ‘inmate manipulation,’ and list the consequences for inappropriate staff/inmate relationships. List and explain the basic procedures for insuring the identification of individuals within the institution and for the safe and efficient control of keys and tools. Define occupational stress, its symptoms, and treatments. Understand the management of suicides in correctional settings, myths about suicides, and common techniques of committing suicide. Understand the topic of religion among inmates and how religion is managed in prisons. Describe symptoms of substance abuse among inmates and how drugs enter prisons.

Instruction: Students must complete: three hours of “Orientation to Corrections,” two hours of “Introduction to Security,” four hours of “Orientations to Suicide,” two and one-half hours of “Correctional Communications,” three hours of “Orientation to Religion,” two hours of “Inmate Con Games,” two hours of “Substance Abuse,” two hours of “Security Threat Groups,” and one hour of “Stress.” Instructional methods include lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint, videos, and handouts), exercises, and study guides. Evaluation methods include written examination and feedback on exercises.

Credit Recommendation: In the lower-division associate/baccalaureate degree category, one semester credit.