Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council

Site Visit Report

Description of Training Organization

The Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council (the “Council”) is the State of Vermont’s commission on law enforcement training. The Council includes twelve members, including:

- The Commissioner of Public Safety
- The Commissioner of Corrections
- The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles
- The Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife
- The Attorney General
- A member of the Vermont Trooper's Association (elected by that association)
- A member of the Vermont Police Association (elected by that association)
- Five members to represent law enforcement and the public, appointed by the Governor solicited from the Vermont State’s Attorneys', Sheriffs', and Police Chiefs' Associations for three-year terms

The Executive Director reports to the Council. The Executive Director oversees a full-time staff of eight, including:

- An Assistant Director
- Two Training and Curriculum Development Coordinators
- One Training Coordinator
- An In-Service Training Specialist
- A Youth Services Coordinator
- An Administrative Secretary
- A Program Services Clerk

The mission of the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council is to establish rules, policies, regulations and standards for certification and training of criminal justice personnel and to serve as a resource to municipalities, counties, and the state to improve the quality of citizen protection. The Council accomplishes this mission by developing a comprehensive program to provide high quality criminal justice training in a cooperative, efficient and effective manner through proper utilization of modern technology and coordination of our facility.

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 Vermont Police Academy may obtain such records of this training by contacting:

Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council
317 Sanitorium Road
Pittsford, VT 05763
(802) 483-6228

Description of Training Programs

The Vermont Police Academy (the “Academy”) conducts two full time basic training classes a year. The sixteen week course is conducted in a paramilitary environment designed to prepare an individual for a career in policing. The curriculum includes Criminal Law, Defensive Tactics, Conflict Management/Crisis Intervention Training, Community Policing, Investigative Procedures, Motor Vehicle Law and Patrol Procedures. Students must maintain acceptable academic standards to remain in the program (minimum 70% average and maximum of three failures on graded assignments/practical exams or competencies). Athletics and physical training are mandatory and are as much a part of the training program as academics. Classes run from Monday through Friday. During the week students are required to remain at the Academy and adhere to Academy rules and regulations. Upon satisfactory completion of the program students will be certified or certifiable by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council.

The mission of the Vermont Police Academy:

- We believe that to create the most professional, highly trained Vermont police officer we must create an environment that challenges, empowers, and promotes discipline, respect, team work, and fitness. Fitness is a term that reflects both the mind and body. It is our mission to provide academic challenges that sharpen the intellect while reconditioning the body for a lifetime of health.
- Through quality instruction and curriculum, we will provide the resources for officers to gain technical proficiency in foundational police subjects. To establish and earn the public’s trust, officers must live by the highest ethical standards and therefore it is our mission to provide an environment that stresses integrity and strong morals.
- In that police officers are community leaders it is part of our mission to provide the training and skills necessary to facilitate community growth, develop leadership/followership abilities, and reinforce positive values.
- We will create an atmosphere that seeks to develop a degree of humility and an optimistic attitude toward the potential in each of us. In creating this environment, the goal of the Vermont Police Academy is to produce a highly dedicated and professional Vermont police officer.

The courses listed below comprise the Basic Academy. This is a 852-hour, eighteen-week basic training program that includes and/or exceeds all requirements of the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council. The Academy provides comprehensive information to all state police jurisdictions on the content and duration of basic police training.

**Location:** Vermont Police Academy; Pittsford, VT

**Length:** 16 weeks (852 hours)

**Program Objective:** To provide participants with the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to serve effectively at the entry level as a law enforcement officer in the State of Vermont.

**Learning Objective:** Upon successful completion of this program, the graduate will be able to perform all routine duties of an entry level peace officer in the State of Vermont.

**Instructional Methods:** A combination of lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint and study handouts), classroom discussion, case studies and practical exercises.

**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.

Daniel LeClair, PhD  Richard Sauer, MPA
Professor and Chair, Graduate Programs  Investigator
Criminal Justice, Urban Affairs, and City Planning  New York State Police
Metropolitan College  Adjunct Instructor
Boston University  Marist College
Boston, Massachusetts  Liberty, New York

Michael J. Bolton, PhD  Timothy Birch, MS
Associate Professor and Chair  Assessment Coordinator
Sociology/Criminal Justice Department  Criminal Justice Training Assessment
Marymount University  Albany, New York
Arlington, Virginia

Description of Visit

From December 3 to 5, 2003, the above four representatives of Excelsior College conducted a site visit to the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council to assess an educational program offered by the Vermont Police Academy.

On the first morning (Wednesday, December 3, 2003), the team assembled at the Vermont Police Academy. Following a brief organizational meeting and introductions to the academy staff (including the Executive Director, Assistant Director, and Training and Curriculum Development Coordinator for the Basic Academy), 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.

Professor LeClair reviewed material for the following courses: Criminal Procedure and Victimology. Associate Professor Bolton reviewed material for the following courses: Fitness and Wellness, Introduction to Law Enforcement, and Physical Education. Investigator Sauer reviewed material for the following courses: Criminal Investigation and Traffic Administration.

The above list of courses was developed from a list of subjects mandated by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council and the Vermont Police Academy.

The team began December 4 by continuing to review the Vermont Police Academy materials. On the morning of December 5, the team completed its review of program materials and discussed the credit recommendations with academy staff.

Credit Recommendations

Summary of Credit Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied Traffic Administration</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Investigation</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness and Wellness</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Law Enforcement</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Criminal Law</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Administration</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimology</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>19 credits</strong></td>
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Course Descriptions

Applied Traffic Administration (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Academy
Location: Vermont Police Academy, Pittsford, VT
Length: 48 hours
Dates: January 2003 through June 2009
Objectives: Discuss the tasks and decisions of Driving Under the Influence (DUI) detection, the magnitude and scope of DUI-related crashes, deaths, injuries and property loss, social aspects of the DUI problem, and legal issues in DUI enforcement. Recognize typical vehicle maneuvers and human indicators symptomatic of DUI, and typical sensory and behavioral clues of alcohol and/or drug influence. Employ psychophysical exercises in pre-arrest screening of DUI suspects. Discuss the elements of DUI prosecution, and the physiology and psychology of alcohol related to DUI enforcement. Identify proper and altered vehicle identification numbers (VIN) and proper location for VINs. Discuss importance of speed enforcement and relationship to motor vehicle collisions, and the basic principles and operation of Doppler Radar.
Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: Thirty-two hours of “DWI Enforcement,” four hours of “VIN Verification,” eight hours of “Radar Operation,” and four hours of “Occupant Protection Usage” in the Basic Academy. Instructional methods for this course include lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint and study handouts), classroom discussion, case studies and practical exercises. Evaluation methods include written examinations and practical exercises.
Credit Recommendation: In the lower division associate/baccalaureate degree category, two semester credits.

Criminal Investigation (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Academy
Location: Vermont Police Academy, Pittsford, VT
Length: 28 hours
Dates: January 2003 through June 2009
Objectives: Demonstrate the implementation of problems in using search and seizure, collection and preservation of evidence, interviews and interrogation and investigative techniques in case preparation, along with providing testimony in court. Understand the issues related to non-criminal death scene investigation as a first
Procedural Criminal Law (3 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Academy
Location: Vermont Police Academy
Length: 48 Hours
Dates: January 2003 through June 2009
Objectives: To provide the candidate with knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and Civil Rights Amendments applicable to the rights of citizens to be protected from arbitrary government actions, review of court decisions affecting criminal justice procedures, application of Vermont Statutes to practical problems, and the definition of legal terms applicable to criminal law.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than forty-eight lecture hours of procedural criminal law. Instructional methods include lectures supplemented by PowerPoint, study handouts, and case studies. Evaluation methods include written examinations.

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

Traffic Administration (4 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Academy
Location: Vermont Police Academy, Pittsford, VT
Length: 88 hours
Dates: January 2003 through June 2009
Objectives: Define terms used in accident investigation, the magnitude and scope of traffic crashes, the legal responsibility of the police accident investigation, selective enforcement and highway safety programs. Discuss major steps in accident scene management, policies concerning accident scene procedures, and basic investigation equipment. Identify human conditions that may contribute to possible accident causation. Discuss effective interview techniques, human injury in relation to occupant and vehicle position, and vehicle damage in relationship to accident causation. Identify and document accident scene evidence. Identify motor vehicle law definitions and violations. Identify basic safety guidelines, precautions, priorities and responsibilities for hazardous materials involved in transportation incidents. Identify hazardous conditions with the use of labels, placards, shipping papers, Material Safety Data Sheets and the North American Emergency Response Guidebook.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than forty hours of "Accident Investigation," forty hours of "Motor Vehicle Law," and eight hours of "Hazardous Materials" in the Basic Academy. Instructional methods for this course include lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint and study handout), classroom discussion, case studies, and practical exercises. Evaluation methods include written examination and practical exercises.

Credit Recommendation: In the lower division associate/baccalaureate degree category, four semester credits.
Victimology (3 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Academy
Location: Vermont Police Academy, Pittsford, VT
Length: 45 hours
Dates: January 2003 through June 2009

Objectives: Discuss the most recent information on nature, laws and investigative procedures dealing with specific cases of victimology so as to enable appropriate responses to family disturbance and domestic violence. Discriminate among emotional, investigative and legal aspects of sexual assault both for the responding officer and the needs of the victim. Identify various types of child abuse. Illustrate major considerations and aspects of investigation of abuse. Develop a proper strategy for an investigative interview. Identify the nature of hate crimes. Formulate information and strategies to identify and investigate hate crimes. Develop perspectives and strategies that will enable officers to work more effectively with their departments, other agencies and broader communities. Inform law enforcement officials and their agencies of strategies to prevent civil and personal liabilities.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: eleven hours of “Domestic Violence Response Training,” twelve hours of “Sexual Assault Investigation,” twelve hours of “Sexual/Physical Abuse of Children,” four hours of “Healing the Emotionally Disturbed,” eight hours of “Hate Criminal Investigation,” and two hours of “Victim Assistance Programs.” Instructional methods include lecture (supplemented by PowerPoint and study handout), classroom and group discussion, and case study. Evaluation methods include written examination and practical exercise.

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