

Vermont Department of Corrections

Site Visit Report

Description of Training Organization

The Vermont Correctional Academy operates under the Vermont Department of Corrections and is part of the Human Resource Development Unit that oversees correctional services training in the organization.

Corrections Training Advisory Board

The Academy collaborates with the Corrections Training Advisory Board. The board is comprised of 12 members appointed by the Commissioner of Corrections, Robert Hofmann. The board operates from the following Executive Mandate:

Mission

The Vermont Correctional Academy Training Board will promote correctional professional development within the Vermont Department of Corrections.

Operational Guidelines

Twelve members, appointed by the Commissioner, will represent a broad spectrum of Vermont Department of Corrections' employees.

Committees

The Board will maintain three standing committees:

- The Curriculum Committee, which will ensure that performance objectives will drive training curriculum. Training will be designed with consideration of correctional standards.
- The Quality Assurance Committee, which will ensure training is developed, evaluated, and updated based on annual assessment. The annual assessments will identify current job related training needs and make recommendations for any necessary action.
- The Standards Committee, which will ensure the integration of policy and directive revisions with training curriculum development.

Academy Staffing:

The Academy Administrator reports to the Director of Human Resource Development. The Administrator oversees a full time staff of two, including: training coordinators.

Academy Mission Statement:

The Vermont Correctional Academy is vital to the Department's statutory mandate to establish training programs for new employees and to establish such in-service training programs as deemed advisable. As an Academy we are responsible for to develop training curriculum with a goal of producing highly trained, professional and competent staff throughout the department. To maintain a standard of excellence the Academy is dedicated to the development of curriculum that is constantly reviewed, adapted and revised to ensure meeting the needs of today's correctional professional. The Academy will strive to prepare new employees for success in the correctional profession, enhance the knowledge and skills of experienced staff and empower all staff to maintain a high standard of professionalism.

Description of the Training Program

The Correctional Academy conducts seven residential training classes a year. The eight week program is a combination of structured residential classroom and Field Training designed to prepare newly hired staff for a career in corrections. The curriculum is comprised of eight chapters of learning that includes; Orientation, Ethics and the Corrections Professional, Rights and Responsibilities of Offenders, Medical/Mental Health, Sexual Abuse/Assault, Supervision of Offenders, Conflict and Crisis Management, Security Management, Emergency Prevention and Response.

The 120 hour Field Training component of the Academy located in the Orientation Chapter contains a group of Standardized Performance Checklists (Lesson Plans) that must be completed with each trainee. They are designed to serve as both applied learning and teach to protocols that are best learned at the point of service delivery.

In the residential training phase, trainees are evaluated through written testing (Knowledge) and Competency Assessment (Skill). There are standards connected to this evaluation and approximately 10 % of enrollees annually do not graduate from the program. This figure includes both those who self-select out and those who are terminated.

Unless granted commuter status, students are required to remain at the Academy and adhere to Academy Rules and Regulations. Upon successful completion of the residential program trainees are certified by the Commissioner of Corrections.

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 Correctional Academy may obtain such records of this training by contacting:

Vermont Correctional Academy
c/o College of St. Joseph
71 Clement Rd. Box 162
Rutland, Vt. 05701

Description of Training Programs

Location: Vermont Correctional Academy, College of St. Joseph, Rutland, VT

Length: 8 weeks (320 hours)

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

Instructional Methods: A combination of lecture, interactive discussions, practical applications, use of charts, PowerPoint presentations, and video.

Learning Assessments: Written and practical examinations are used.

Description of Team

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

Daniel P. LeClair, PhD
 Professor and Chair
 Graduate Programs in Criminal Justice
 Boston University, Metropolitan
 College
 Wayland, Massachusetts

Eric C. Schultz, MA
 Senior Assessment Coordinator
 Criminal Justice Training Assessment
 Albany, New York

James A. Caruso, Esq.
 Principle Law Clerk
 Acting Justice of the Supreme Court
 County of Rensselaer
 Troy, New York

Description of Visit

From February 7-8, 2007, three representatives of Criminal Justice Training Assessment conducted a site visit to the Vermont Department of Corrections Academy to assess the Basic Training program offered by the Training Division. On the first morning (Thursday, February 7, 2007), the team assembled at the Academy. Following a brief organizational meeting and introductions to the academy staff, the assessment team was shown to the lab to access all the necessary materials and 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. The course areas were discussed and then assigned to a specific faculty member to begin reviewing.

Due to the quality and nature of delivery of the materials, the assessment team was able to complete the assessment by the end of the first day. In the late afternoon, the team conducted an exit-interview/debrief with the staff and administration of the training academy.

Summary of Credit Recommendations

<i>Program:</i> Basic Correctional Officer Training	
Communication Skills in the Correctional Setting	3 credits
Defensive Tactics in the Correctional Setting	2 credits
Emergency Response Training	2 credits
Human Relations & Special Populations	2 credits
Introduction to Correctional Procedures	2 credits
Introduction to Corrections	1 credit
Practicum in Corrections	2 credits
TOTAL	14 credits

Course Descriptions

Communication Skills in the Correctional Setting (3 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 40 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: By the end of this training, participants will be able to: Build rapport and gather information from offenders using listening; Use listening and rapport-building skills to achieve 80/20 conversations; Identify and report the eight listening skills when demonstrated; Identify potentially dangerous situations and plan an effective intervention; Assess your own thinking and make adjustments to effectively intervene with offenders; Using the Behavior Continuum, translate the offender's behavior into English to better plan your approach; and List the three components assessed when your intuition is "triggered." Identify situations where feedback should be provided for behavior using the behavior continuum and ACE (Appreciate, Confidence, Effort) List the three levels of pro-social behavior and give an example for each. List and demonstrate the three components of feedback. Staff will issue positive, direct and observable instructions to gain cooperation; and Identify the three components of a clearly stated direction. Apply the CRC technique with any offender with any behavior they demonstrate. During interactions where offender cooperation is needed. Staff will use the five steps in the test component of cooperation to create the expectation of cooperation. List the three components of operation and what to look for in each component. Identify positive and negative responses to the test. Correctly use the four-part module to issue feedback and get offenders to cooperate. Identify the skill and create a report showing the use of the four-part module. Correctly differentiate, categorize, and report the behavior of inmates using the Behavior Continuum; Identify five components of the Behavior Continuum; Identify the translation and intervention at each level. Identify the five skills of Ontrack and write a report describing this intervention. Given a work situation where steps one through four in gaining cooperation have not worked correctly use the Ontrack skills to get cooperation.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: forty hours of "Advanced Communications Techniques." Instructional methods for the course include lecture, PowerPoint presentations, interactive discussions, and role play exercises. Examination methods include practical exercises and verbal and written examinations.

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

Defensive Tactics in the Correctional Setting (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 40 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: By the end of this block of instruction, participants will: Participate in a team restraint scenario. List the three roles in Team restraint. Verbally set up a team restraint plan. Identify the effects of OC; Define difference between irritant & inflammatory; Identify types of OC delivery systems; Demonstrate how to use and spray OC; Demonstrate how to decontaminate when OC is used; and Identify first aid procedures. Understand that all force has injury potential; Understand the importance of picking your target; Gain knowledge of what kind of injury are possible from different body targets; and Understand the importance of having all inmates involved in a use of force to be screened by a medical professional. Understand when they can or cannot place an inmate into restraints; Understand what uses of restraints is considered a use of force and what uses are not considered a use of force; Know the nomenclature for handcuffs and leg irons; Demonstrate compliant handcuffing; Demonstrate rear supported wristlock cuffing; Demonstrate ground position handcuffing; Demonstrate placing an offender into a medium security setup

for transport; and Know when you can and cannot use restraints on a pregnant inmate. Demonstrate a Compliant Escort, Non-Compliant Escort, Straight Arm Bar Take down, Elbow Roll-Over Arm Bar Take down, Neck Pull Down, Rear Wrist Lock, and a Front Wrist Lock. Demonstrate an interview stance; Demonstrate patterns of movement; Understand the importance's of maintaining a reactionary gap; and Demonstrate giving verbal commands. Understand where excessive force cases are tried; Discuss the case law hierarchy; Discuss two important court cases that established standards for use of force in Vermont; Discuss the importance of writing an incident report on all use of force incidents; Understand the reasonable officer standard. Understand the key parts of use of force Directive 413.01; Be able to identify the difference between Emergent/Reactive force and Calculated/Planned force; Be able to identify three (3) situations that they would have to use force; Have reviewed the four (4) prohibitions on using force; Have reviewed the Use of Force Continuum; and Have reviewed three (3) special use of force circumstances. Participate in a cell extraction scenario; Will be able to list at least 5 roles on a cell extraction team; and Verbally give the choice to the offender as the leader.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: forty hours of "Use of Force." Instructional methods for the course include lecture, PowerPoint presentations, interactive discussions, and role play exercises. Examination methods include practical exercises and verbal and written examinations.

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

Emergency Response Training (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 40 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: Recognize that different diseases have different disease transmission pathways; Identify the different disease transmission pathways; List all 4 pathways; Define infection exposure incidents; List and define infection exposure control measures; Define universal precautions; Recognize and explain the significance of selected communicable diseases in the correctional setting; Recognize possible signs and symptoms of the diseases discussed; and Identify and discuss prevention, screening, diagnosis, and treatment for each of the diseases discussed. Name the four components of a fire. Name 5 of the 8 sources of the components of a fire in a correctional setting. Name the five phases of a fire. Name the two special considerations that could arise during a fire. Name the "Golden Rule" of search and rescue. Demonstrate a right or left search pattern. Identify 4 ways how fire is extinguished. Identify 4 classifications of fires. Recognize 4 fire extinguishers and when to use them. Identify the 5 components of a fire extinguisher. Perform a fire extinguisher inspection. Demonstrate how to use a fire extinguisher. Identify your role in a fire situation. Name 4 reasons offenders start fires. Name 3 places on you a SCBA protects. Identify 4 respiratory hazards you may encounter in a fire. Identify the limitations of using a SCBA. Demonstrate donning a SCBA. If training conditions permit, demonstrate a search and rescue in a smoke condition.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: two hours of "Blood borne and Communicable Diseases," sixteen hours of "Emergency Preparedness," twelve hours of "Fire Safety," and eight hours of "First Aid/CPR." Instructional methods for the course include lecture, interactive discussions, practical applications, use of charts, PowerPoint presentations, and video. Examination methods include practical exercises and written examinations.

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

Human Relations and Special Populations (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 30 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: Identify at least 3 dilemmas faced by people who are "different" from those they work with; Identify at least 4 ways to help people be more effective at work; Communicate with respect concerns regarding diversity in the workplace; Identify 2 types of sexual harassment that can take place in the worksite; List 5 incidents that could be regarded as sexual harassment; Explain the reporting procedure when someone is allegedly sexually harassed; Explain what to expect once a complaint is made; and State what is meant by "reasonable accommodation" in the employment of persons with a disability. Identify at least 3 dilemmas faced by people who are "different" from those they work with; Identify at least 4 ways to help people be more effective at work; Communicate with respect concerns regarding diversity in the workplace; Identify 2 types of sexual harassment that can take place in the worksite; List 5 incidents that could be regarded as sexual harassment; Explain the reporting procedure when someone is allegedly sexually harassed; Explain what to expect once a complaint is made; and State what is meant by "reasonable accommodation" in the employment of persons with a disability. Recognize emergent and chronic health problems; Physical illnesses; Mental illnesses; Disability issues; Recognize symptoms of depression; Define co-occurring disorders; Describe life-threatening behaviors and what to do; and Describe your role in recognizing and addressing related issues. Recognize characteristics of prisons and jails that make them prone to suicide. List at least five signs and symptoms of a possible suicidal inmate. Discuss times of increased suicide risk. Discuss events that can trigger a possible suicide. List the five steps to respond to an actively suicidal inmate. Demonstrate use of the INS form by performing an INS interview. Recognize the importance of early intervention for suicide prevention. Communicate opinions with respect and courteously. List 3 unique risk factors for the women in our system. Explain how the Parent and Families Act affect incarcerated women. Define staff sexual misconduct; Recognize the negative effects of staff sexual misconduct; Recognize the personal and professional risks involved when staff engage in sexual misconduct; Identify the differences between sexual misconduct, assault and abuse; Identify why and how agency culture plays a role in misconduct; Who is most vulnerable for involvement in staff sexual misconduct and what characteristics and experiences make them vulnerable; How agency culture affects the actions and perceptions of employees and offenders; After a short lecture, participants will identify the 5 forms of workplace harassment. After reading 3 different scenarios, participants will analyze, explain and defend in small groups why the scenario either is or is not a form of workplace harassment. In report form, identify 2 times you have engaged in workplace harassment here at the academy and under the "Action Taken" section list 3 possible consequences for others for each incident. Discuss and identify key components of PREA as it relates to VT. DOC. Describe PREA mandates as they relate to VT. DOC. Complete classroom tasks addressing individual knowledge and comprehension of inmate on inmate sexual assault. Locate resources and both locally and federally to assist with PREA mandates. Give at least one example of Code of Silence and explain the impact on a work site. Define Staff Sexual Misconduct. Recognize the Negative Effectives of Staff Sexual Misconduct. Recognize the personal and Professional risks involved when staff engage in sexual misconduct. Identify the Differences between sexual misconduct, assault and abuse.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: two hours of "Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)," two hours of "Diversity," eight hours of "Mental Health," four hours of "Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)," two hours of "Preventing Staff Sexual Misconduct," two hours of "Sexual Harassment," eight hours of "Suicide Prevention," and two hours of "Working with Women Offenders." Instructional methods for the course include lecture, interactive discussions, practical applications, use of charts, PowerPoint presentations, and video. Examination methods include practical exercises and written examinations.

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

Introduction to Correctional Procedures (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 33 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: Identify 4 potential ways contraband is introduced to a correctional facility. Demonstrate the 6 steps of a proper pat search. List the 12 steps for conducting a proper strip search. List three situations in which strip searches must be performed. List two differences female offenders bring to each of the following: strip search, pat search and room shakedown. List 2 reasons why empathy for an offender is important during a strip search. List one specific drug from each drug category. Name 4 of the 7 categories of drugs and list two signs of abuse of each given drug. Describe what effect a given drug category has on the human body. Describe the difference

between misuse versus long term use. List DOC modes for drug/alcohol testing and why we test. Define the responsibilities of the grievance Superintendent/Manager and Grievance Coordinator. Identify and define required responses to complaints and grievance actions. Define and distinguish between “emergency” and “non-emergency” grievances. Recognize grievance system abuse. List the four universal employee performance expectations that are to be carried out. Identify and define the use of required complaint and grievance forms. Demonstrate an understanding of alternative dispute resolution techniques used in resolving offender complaints. Observe fellow trainee on your headcount and document presence. List steps to take if fellow trainee on your headcount is absent. Document Squad or Class headcount in logbook. Identify the appropriate DOC policy number for key control. List the reasons why key control is necessary in a correctional facility. Demonstrate the appropriate passage of a key from one officer to another officer. Demonstrate securing a key to an officer. List the 11 responsibilities an officer has regarding a log book. List the 7 different types of log book entries. List the responsibilities of the Training Assistant and Training Coordinator regarding log books. Demonstrate log entries over the length of the Correctional Academy. Identify the 12 classification principles; Identify DOC custody levels and how that relates to the Correctional Officer; Recognize the importance of the LSI-R and how that identifies “risk”; Recognize the duties of the Correctional Officer as they relate to the Offender Responsibility Plan. Define Due Process. Recognize why the DOC has an Inmate Discipline system. Recognize and fill out a Disciplinary Report correctly. Define the difference between a Major or Minor Disciplinary violation. Recognize the steps taken in Investigating a Disciplinary Report. Recognize the Hearing Process. Define Continuances and when and why they are granted. Define the following roles of: Hearing Assistant, Presenting Officer, Hearing Officer. Define an inmate’s plea. Define the Findings. Define what sanctions are. Define the appeal process. Define Disciplinary Committee. Develop Due Process for an Inmate. Recognize the parts of the radio; List the commonly used “10” codes; List the phonetic alphabet; Demonstrate the proper use of a radio. Recognize why staff write reports. List the necessary contents of a report. List the elements of a report. Recognize the importance of editing. Define the 3 housing statuses; Administrative Segregation; Protective Custody; Disciplinary Segregation; Identify the 5 staff positions responsible for Restrictive Housing visits and the log entries required; Recognize applicable access to services for each status including commissary; Given a scenario, demonstrate the ability to accurately complete the “Segregation Confinement Log Sheet” and “Segregation Confinement Check Sheet.”

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: eight hours of “Contraband/Searches,” four hours of “Drug I.D.,” four hours of “Grievance,” one hour of “Headcount,” one hour of “Key Control,” one hour of “Log Books,” four hours of “Offender Classification,” four hours of “Offender Rules and Regulations – Discipline,” one hour of “Radio,” one hour of “Report Writing,” and four hours of “Restrictive Housing.” Instructional methods for the course include lecture, interactive discussions, practical applications, use of charts, PowerPoint presentations, and video. Examination methods include practical exercises and written examinations.

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

Introduction to Corrections (1 credit, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 20 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: Recognize the skill sets and service delivery orientation which is foundational to the “corrections professional.” Identify and reflect on the principles you use to guide your life. Review mission statement and discuss how strength-based approaches advance Department of Correction vision, mission, values, and principles. Contrast Influential and Dictatorial Supervision. Apply Universal Steps of Engagement and examine Supportive Authority. Describe the benefits of a strength-based approach that incorporates the use of Supportive Authority, and Universal Engagement. List four types of liability cases you could encounter as a Correctional Officer. Define what areas where the 1st, 4th, 8th, and 14th Amendments most impacts upon a prison setting. List the four requirements of Due Process. List four situations that could arise in a correctional facility that creates liability for a Correctional Officer if they do not follow procedure. List six areas in which the U.S. Constitution forbids discrimination. List two factors that need to be present in every proper use of force. List three factors by which the courts weigh the legality of searches in corrections. List three levels/situations required for searches. Describe the daily activities and responsibilities of a correctional officer in a specific Vermont correctional facility; apply principles, practices, skills, and abilities learned in the classroom to empirical correctional activities including, but not limited to inmates counts and movements; emergency incident reports; demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with superiors, peers, and inmates; and develop critical thinking, evaluation, and decision making skills in the complex environment of daily correctional operations.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than: eight hours of “Academy Rules and Regulations,” four hours of “Corrections Professional,” four hours of “Legal Issues in Corrections,” and four hours of “Organizational Overview.” Instructional methods for the course include lecture, interactive discussions, practical applications, use of charts, PowerPoint presentations, and video. Examination methods include practical exercises and written examinations.

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

Practicum in Corrections (2 credits, lower division)

Program: Basic Correctional Officer Training

Location: Vermont Department of Corrections Training Academy, Rutland, VT

Length: 80 hours

Dates: June 2005 through June 2009

Objectives: Describe the daily activities and responsibilities of a correctional officer in a specific Vermont correctional facility; apply principles, practices, skills, and abilities learned in the classroom to empirical correctional activities including, but not limited to inmates counts and movements; emergency incident reports; demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with superiors, peers, and inmates; and develop critical thinking, evaluation, and decision making skills in the complex environment of daily correctional operations. To produce a highly trained and positively motivated correctional officer capable of meeting or exceeding standards of performance required by the Department of Corrections. To provide equal and standardized training to all newly hired correctional officers and to provide remedial training in those areas where deficiencies are identified. To build the foundation of knowledge given at the Correctional Academy, thereby creating an environment in which the trainee may develop new skills and increase proficiency in those acquired in the academic setting. To improve the Department’s screening process by providing on-the-job observation of each trainee’s performance. To establish an appraisal system which is valid and job-related, utilizing a standardized and systematic approach to the documented measurement of the probationary officer’s performance. To establish career paths within the Department of Corrections providing qualified officers with additional training and opportunities to develop leadership skills. To ultimately increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Department by enhancing the climate of professionalism and competency demanded by the ethical standards of corrections.

Instruction: Students must complete no fewer than 80 hours of “Practicum in Corrections (on-the-job training).” Instructional methods for the course include lecture, out-of-class study, and practical application exercises. Examination methods include written exercises, practical performance assessments, formal debriefing, and written quiz.

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