

**BLET ADVISORY GROUP
MEETING MINUTES
April 3, 2020
Teleconference Meeting**

Jennifer Fisher called the BLET Advisory Group Teleconference meeting to order at 10:00 am and thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Jennifer Fisher conducted a formal roll call. A quorum was present by teleconference. Jennifer Fisher then recognized guests in attendance and asked that they introduce themselves.

Members Present:

Rick Barney, Craven Community College
Kelly Blackwelder, Town of Elon Police Department
Joseph Cotton, North Carolina State Highway Patrol
Jon Gregory, Wake Technical Community College
Billy Kelly, Rockingham Police Department
Randy Shepherd, Guilford County Sheriff's Office
Richard Tullis, Asheville Police Department
Sammy Turner, Brunswick County Sheriff's Office
Aaron Vassey, Cleveland Community College
Steve Warren, Western Piedmont Community College

Members Absent:

Kenneth Klamar, Sunset Beach Police Department

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Steven Combs, Criminal Justice Standards Division
Brenda Rivera, North Carolina Department of Justice
Michelle Schilling, Criminal Justice Standards Division
Charminique Williams, Criminal Justice Standards Division

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Autumn Hanna, Sheriff's Standards Division
Diane Konopka, Sheriff's Standards Division
Chris Scott, Sheriff's Standards Division

Staff Present:

Trevor Allen, North Carolina Justice Academy
Laurie Austen, North Carolina Justice Academy
Jennifer Fisher, North Carolina Justice Academy
Alex Gazaway, North Carolina Justice Academy
Stacy Holloman, North Carolina Justice Academy
Dan Worley, North Carolina Justice Academy

Guests Present:

Tracy McPherson, North Carolina Community College System

OLD BUSINESS

- Approval of the December 11, 2019 meeting minutes

Members were allowed to review the minutes from the December 11, 2019 meeting. Sammy Turner made a **motion** to accept the minutes as presented. Rick Barney **seconded**. No further discussion. None opposed. **Motion carried.**

- Revision Titling Categories Update

Jennifer Fisher presented the four new revision titling categories that were agreed upon by the General Instructor Training Advisory Group. These four categories will assist in identifying what type of revisions are being made to the BLET curriculum. Sammy Turner stated that the revision titling categories should be used in all Commission courses. Sammy Turner asked if these categories will also be included in the General Instructor Training program? Stacy Holloman advised that this information would be sent to instructors as an update and included in all Commission courses in the future. Stacy Holloman advised Jennifer Fisher to follow up with Jessica Bullock. The four revision categories are as follows:

- Prepared By:
- Legal Review By:
- Structural Revision By:
- Content Revision By:

- Job Task Analysis Update - Dan Worley began his presentation by introducing Alex Gazaway as the new project coordinator. Dan Worley referred the group to the Basic Law Enforcement Training Review and Revision Project handout that was emailed to the group previously. Alex Gazaway advised that moving forward, instructors will start their focus in a specific module and then choose the order of the courses listed. Alex Gazaway informed the group that the curriculum will be changing from individual blocks to the following four modules. All blocks of instruction will be incorporated into the following four modules.

- Module 1 – Law Enforcement in North Carolina
- Module 2 – Criminal Investigations
- Module 3 – Traffic Investigations
- Module 4 – Patrol Duties and Tactics

The new curriculum will include scenario-based training to aid with retention and application of the materials. Gazaway advised that ethics and integrity will be incorporated into all modules.

Alex Gazaway advised that Modules 2, 3, 4 all build on ethics, integrity, and so on. Module 4 puts all of the information together. Alex Gazaway advised that they had also reviewed other POSTs throughout the country and suggested that we need everyone's input to make this curriculum better. Gazaway asked that anyone making recommendations to please use the track changes feature when making recommendations and asked that you please send the draft lesson plans to others for review as well. Gazaway requested any source materials you are citing when making suggestions and the names of any instructors or resource persons you involve so that this information can be documented appropriately. This is the beginning of a new program, and he is requesting your advice and expertise to make this the best program possible.

Alex Gazaway asked for any feedback, comments, etc. to include any supporting documentation to support input received. Jon Gregory asked Alex Gazaway about the comments in the handout regarding the exclusion of the First Responder block of instruction. Alex Gazaway stated that many students do not receive any further first responder training upon completion of BLET and if they did receive training, that it was inconsistent across the state. Dan Worley advised that this was a recommendation from the BLET Job Task Analysis vendor and that it was still being discussed. Dan Worley also stated that he had spoken with several individuals in outside discussions of adding a "watered-down" tactical medic or first-aid type block, just not the First Responder as currently in BLET.

Alex Gazaway stated that the first two draft lesson plans had been sent to legal staff for review. The two topics sent were Problem Solving and Field Notetaking and Report Writing. Alex Gazaway advised that Communications is next to be sent to legal, and the Wellness block was due back to him this coming Monday. He further advised that Constitutional Law is the next block to be completed. Alex Gazaway thanked Jon Gregory for his thorough review and feedback submitted.

Dan Worley advised the lesson plans that have been sent to them for review so far are not in the typical format. Dan Worley stated that they are focusing right now on content, not format. He ensures that the lesson plans will be formatted appropriately before the final product is complete. Dan Worley stated that the goal is to ensure that the content is relevant, innovative, and current. Dan Worley noted that if there is something that needs to be better, to please let him know.

Trevor Allen thanked the advisory group for their feedback and input and acknowledged the Justice Academy's hard work on this project. Trevor Allen advised that we appreciate any and all input, although we are on a very tight timeline.

➤ Lesson Plan Revisions

- Arrest, Search, and Seizure / Constitutional Law – Jennifer Fisher proposed various content revisions in the lesson plan regarding juvenile rights, interviewing a defendant out of custody, and the Identification Reform Act. Jennifer Fisher also

proposed to remove the Rothgery case from the handouts since it was outdated. Sammy Turner made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Rick Barney **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**

- Elements of Criminal Law – Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision to update the statutory language regarding first-degree murder. Steve Warren made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Kelly Blackwelder **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**
- Law Enforcement Communication and Information Systems – Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision, adding information on the Law Enforcement Exchange database (LInX) based on Dr. Fowler’s recommendations. Jennifer Fisher advised that LInX is also in the process of developing a video, but that would be presented to the group for review at a later date. Sammy Turner made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Rick Barney **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**
- Subject Control Arrest Techniques – Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision to add a statement on the use of lethal force during a disarming attempt of an officer. Richard Tullis made a **motion NOT to accept the proposed revisions**. Kelly Blackwelder **seconded**. There was further discussion by the group about whether changes could be made to the proposed language for consideration. Jennifer Fisher advised that the group was only to consider the language proposed. This revision was proposed by Jarrett McGowan, and the proposed language was further supported by Director, Trevor Allen. Jennifer Fisher agreed to discuss the group’s motion of not accepting the proposed revisions with Jarrett McGowan and report back to the group.
- Firearms - Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision to add a statement on the use of lethal force during a disarming attempt of an officer. Richard Tullis made a **motion NOT to accept the proposed revisions**. Kelly Blackwelder **seconded**. There was further discussion by the group about whether revisions could be made to the proposed language for consideration. Jennifer Fisher advised that the group was only to consider the language proposed. This revision was proposed by Jarrett McGowan, and the proposed language was further supported by Director, Trevor Allen. Jennifer Fisher agreed to discuss the group’s motion of not accepting the proposed revisions with Jarrett McGowan and report back to the group.
- Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) Laws – Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision to update the mission of the North Carolina Alcohol Law Enforcement and the statutory definition of “premise.” Sammy Turner made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Billy Kelly **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**
- Motor Vehicle Laws – Jennifer Fisher proposed a content revision to the information regarding railroad crossings. Steve Warren made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Sammy Turner **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**

- Crowd Management – Jennifer Fisher proposed various content revisions based on the recommendations of Sgt. Humphry of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department. Randy Shepherd made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Rick Barney **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**
- Sheriffs’ Responsibilities: Court Duties – Jennifer Fisher proposed various content revisions based on the recommendations of Tom Bashore of the North Carolina Sheriffs’ Association. Sammy Turner made a **motion** to accept the proposed revisions. Aaron Vassey **seconded**. No further discussion. **Motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

- Controlled Substance - At the request of C.J. Training and Standards Deputy Director Michelle Schilling, Jennifer Fisher asked the group what their thoughts were on the use of real controlled substances as opposed to various types of training aids in the Controlled Substances block of instruction. Michelle Schilling posed the question of value for the students to see the real controlled substances versus seeing illustrations or mock-ups. Rick Barney made a **motion** to leave the language as presently written, emphasizing the importance of students seeing and feeling real controlled substances during their training. **No second motion** was made due to further discussion by the group. Steve Warren advised that it was not difficult to obtain real samples of drugs by getting a court order to possess for training purposes. Rick Barney felt that we should continue to use real drugs in our training. Michelle Schilling expressed concern for the BLET School Directors that do not have access to actual controlled substances. Jon Gregory recommended revising the language to allow for the use of training aids. Rick Barney again recommended leaving the language as written due to it being necessary for students to see and feel real drugs during their training. Michelle Schilling asked the group if the benefit would be lost if an instructor used a training aid over the use of actual drugs. Kelly Blackwelder stated that props or mock-ups are valuable in BLET, but that it would be a hindrance to some programs that do not have the ability to acquire real narcotics for demonstrative purposes. Jennifer Fisher advised the group that she would confer with legal to see what the best language is to include the use of drug training aids if real drugs were not available. Jennifer Fisher advised that whatever language legal recommended would then be included in the July 2020 materials.
- BLET Instructor to Student Ratio – C.J. Training and Standards Deputy Director, Michelle Schilling asked the group if we would consider making the instructor to student ratios consistent throughout BLET with the job task analysis revisions? The topic was tabled until the next meeting to allow Michelle Schilling time to discuss with Dan Worley and Alex Gazaway.

OTHER BUSINESS

➤ Division Reports

Criminal Justice Training and Standards Division Report

○ General Instructor Data

Michelle Schilling advised that 373 instructor certifications were revoked for not completing their annual instructor update. This number does not include voluntary instructor certification surrenders. Michelle Schilling stated that a list of the General Instructor certification revocations is posted on their website, and she encouraged school directors to check this site before using any instructors in their academies. Michelle Schilling advised that just because an instructor may have taken the 2020 instructor update, they may have already been revoked to please check the list before allowing them to instruct in their programs.

Michelle Schilling advised that there are currently seventy-seven (77) approved BLET delivery sites and forty (40) academies currently still in session. Several academies have suspended their training due to COVID-19. Michelle Schilling advised that they had received two separate requests to remove students from suspended programs due to COVID-19 and place them into an academy that was still going.

Due to COVID-19, Michelle Schilling stated that the North Carolina Criminal Justice Training and Standards Commission is on a modified schedule and is currently not open to the public for entrance into the building. However, she asked that all documentation be sent electronically, and communication be done by phone. Michelle Schilling ensured the group that they will continue to provide the same service as always.

Sheriff's Standards

No report at this time.

Legal Counsel

Brenda Rivera advised that she has been assisting the North Carolina Criminal Justice Training and Standards Commission and the North Carolina Sheriffs' Training and Standards Commission to request an executive order for the criminal justice courses interrupted by the COVID-19 crisis to modify the number of hours that can be allotted for breaks and addressing the calendaring issues. Brenda Rivera advised that the executive order is pending the Governor's approval.

Jennifer Fisher opened the floor for questions, comments, concerns, or discussion. No discussions ensued.

ADJOURNMENT

Sammy Turner made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting. Billy Kelly **seconded**. None opposed. **Motion carried**. Meeting adjourned at 11:06 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Fisher
North Carolina Justice Academy

Date
April 8, 2020