

Criminal Justice

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFIED ISSUES

On November 17, we met in Oakland with the Bay Area region participants. Our discussions dealt with identifying possible lower division Administration of Justice courses that might be uniformly accepted as the basis of a core curriculum in our field. Faculty at that meeting identified five areas:

- › Introduction to the Administration of Justice (CAN AJ2);
- › Criminal Law (CAN AJ4);
- › Evidence (CAN AJ6); and
- › Investigation (CAN AJ8).

It was consensus of the participating faculty that a fifth course was needed as part of any core in our field:

- › Community Relations/Cultural Diversity (no CAN number at present)

On December 1, 2001, we met with participants in San Diego. Participating faculty there recommended the following:

- › Introductory course (CAN AJ2) be kept as is.
- › AJ4 be called “Concepts of Criminal Law” and be a generic introduction, and not focus solely on the California Penal Code, as many courses currently do.
- › Evidence (CAN AJ6); and
- › Investigation (CAN AJ8) was also recommended for retention as part of a core curriculum.

Three additional courses were recommended:

- › Criminal Procedure;
- › Written and Oral Communication in Administration of Justice, and
- › Community Relations and Cultural Diversity

On December 15th we met with a group from the Central Valley in Fresno. After discussion of what the previous groups had recommended, it was decided by the Fresno group that an ideal core should consist of:

- ▶ Introduction to the Administration of Justice (AJ2);
- ▶ Introduction to Law (CAN AJ4) (This class should be rewritten to emphasize a generic introduction to law, common law, legal concepts, introduction to codes);
- ▶ Principles of Investigations (CAN AJ8);
- ▶ Writing for Criminal Justice (A new CAN course that this group of faculty felt should be an essential part of the core); and
- ▶ Cultural Diversity and Community Relations (a new course that would include an introduction to concepts in Community Relations, CJ ethics, hate crimes, sensitivity to diverse populations, interpersonal communication, racial, gender, cultural, sub-cultural, sexual orientation, profiling and discrimination).

The Fresno faculty recommended felt as an accepted elective but not part of the core:

- ▶ Evidence (CAN AJ6). The course should include: legal aspects of evidence, hearsay, search and seizure, privilege, burden of proof, and bail.

The faculty also felt that a course in Constitutional Law should be an elective.

On January 5, 2002 we met in Sacramento. Faculty there agreed with all of the other regions that a core must consist of

- ▶ Introduction to CJ class;
- ▶ Introduction to Law; and
- ▶ Investigation; and
- ▶ Community Relations and the CJ system.

They also agreed with the group in the Central valley that “Evidence” should be part of an elective package, but not the core (as opposed to San Diego and Oakland groups who felt that Evidence should be part of a core).

There was also a major discussion as to what should be included in each course. Sacramento recommended that AJ4 should include: common law, and penal (or statutory) law, civil versus criminal, elements of crime, concepts and terminology of criminal law, and history and development of law. AJ8 should include the development of students’ skills in pro-active and re-active investigation techniques; overt methodology of investigation, and should not focus on investigating specific crimes. The Diversity and Community Relations course should be entitled Communities and the Justice System.

On January 19 we met in Cerritos with the “Metro” region faculty. We also had the opportunity to have an Articulation Officer present and participate as part of our discussions. In our discussion of an “ideal” major core of 12-15 units, the following was recommended as part of the core:

- ▶ Introduction to the Administration of Justice (CAN AJ2) (to serve as a prerequisite to all other AJ courses, though they were not supportive of or in agreement about the necessity of a two part section of the introductory course);
- ▶ Introduction to Law (CAN AJ4)
- ▶ Writing class (with accountability)
- ▶ Community Relations/ Diversity/ Human Relations course (to be CANNed)

As an elective course:

- Investigation (AJ8).

IDENTIFIED TRENDS/FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It was clear from all of the regional groups that writing was an area in which our students were not well prepared. Another area of concern that came up in most of the regional meetings was the need for some type of class in diversity that would raise criminal justice students' awareness of cultural differences and diverse populations.

COMMENTS FROM STATEWIDE MEETINGS AND THE GENERAL FIELD

Please see the summary of identified issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DISCIPLINE

It is recommended that updated course descriptors be developed for all of the recommended and required lower-division courses. This would be of great assistance to the community colleges that prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions and would set a standard for these institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORT COURSES (IF DISCUSSED)

There is a real need for writing courses in our field that focus on basic writing skills with special emphasis on the language and concepts of the field. There is also the need for courses in critical thinking and diversity issues that use as examples discipline-related subject matter.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

Some of the four-year institutions, especially those that do not have lower-division courses in the major, are reluctant to agree to a common core they believe would be "imposed" upon them. Additional discussion among representatives of these institutions will be a goal for subsequent years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FORWARDED

None at this time

IMPAC OUTREACH PRESENTATIONS MADE BY MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP

None at this time.