Guidelines
for
Distance Learning

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

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Introduction

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE or Commission) encourages the delivery of quality continuing education programs for all law enforcement personnel. The Commission uses educational best practice standards as the basis of its development and evaluation of continuing education courses. As the demand for training and training requirements increase, there is a need for alternatives to traditional classroom training. Alternative training methods include such distance learning options as computer-based delivery systems, web-based programming, and blended learning options.

The Commission has developed specific guidelines for distance learning. These guidelines apply to all distance learning modalities and providers, with or without a TCOLE contract training provider provision. Contract training providers who report training delivered by distance learning must have the distance learning stipulation in their contract or obtain an addendum to their current contract per proposal submission guidelines. Law Enforcement departments, who do not have a training provider contract, may conduct/report distance learning training for their agency employees only, if approved by their Chief Administrative Officer. **All distance learning must meet TCOLE standards.**

General Guidelines for Distance Learning

Definition

Distance learning is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the presentation of the core learning objectives of the instructional period. Methods of instruction for these activities include but are not limited to: a standalone course, a blended learning format involving two or more delivery methods, or a hybrid learning format where distance learning is utilized to supplement standard classroom instruction (adapted from the United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, NRS Guidelines for Distance Education).

In the past, distance learning was thought of as a prepackaged text, audio, or video course taken by an isolated learner with limited interaction with an instructor or other students. Contemporary distance learning has evolved to include the implementation of computer and electronics technology including, but not limited to, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs, and other online technology; with instructor involvement in either real or delayed time or on an as needed basis. Interactivity via computer software also makes the distance learning experience more fulfilling and productive (adapted from the California Distance Learning Project).

Key points to consider when developing a distance learning experience are as follows (guidelines adapted from Wm. Horton's, E-Learning by Design):

- Distance learning must carry out the course learning objectives. Learning objectives are described in precise standards, measurable performances, and well defined conditions. Distance learning must assist the student in achieving these objectives, and assess student progress by reference to these objectives (learning objectives are to be reviewed by the provider during each TCOLE Training Cycle to assure their clarity, utility, and appropriateness for the students).

- The selection and application of technologies for a course must be appropriate for the intended learning objectives and subject matter content (see below section on "Inappropriate Materials for Distance Learning").

- Course curricula must be developed by individuals with special competencies in content, instructional methods, or technologies, and involve Subject Matter Experts.

- Support systems are accessible to and usable by the students, are sufficiently flexible to accommodate different learning styles, and facilitates interactivity among all elements of the learning environment.

- Access to student support services to assist students to effectively use the course resources (such as: registration, accessibility issues, and technology assistance).

- The provider must have an infrastructure for using technology that supports its learning goals and activities and must address system security to assure the integrity and validity of information shared in the learning activities.

- The learning design and system technologies must be evaluated by the provider on a regular basis for effectiveness, with findings utilized as a basis for improvement.

Inappropriate Course Materials for Distance Learning

The following are examples of course curricula which are not appropriate for distance learning:

- Any licensing course or portion thereof. Prior TCOLE approval is required before any licensing course or portion of a licensing course may be delivered by distance learning.

- Any legislatively mandated course which prohibits distance or online learning. (Example, TCOLE 3841 – Crisis Intervention)

- Any course which includes learning objectives requiring the student to demonstrate a skill. This does not prohibit a blended learning model to be used. (Examples, TCOLE 2106 Intermediate Crime Scene Search & Investigation, and TCOLE 1014 Basic Instructor Course) (Refer to Annex 1)

Review of Distance Learning Contract Addendum Proposals

Distance learning programs may be delivered through different methods of instruction as appropriate. TCOLE conducts an approval process prior to an entity obtaining the right to offer training via a distance learning format. If you are a contract training provider, this process is completed through a stipulation in your contract or an addendum to the current contract. This contract must be current and in good standing prior to an addendum request. If you are not a contract training provider, the review process is the same but will have a stipulation that this training can only be utilized by department personnel.

Proposal Submission Packet Checklist

Departments shall comply with the following requirements when sending a course for review. If these documents are not provided, the course will be returned to the sender. Proposed courses shall be consistent with the Commission's current development guidelines.

Proposals for Distance Learning submitted to TCOLE for approval must include the following items in a narrative format:

1. Letter of Intent: What is the purpose of your proposal?

2. Needs Assessment for the course being proposed: Why is this course needed for your department, in your area, or for law enforcement personnel in general?

3. Needs Assessment for the delivery method: Why is this course being offered in the format selected? Why does this delivery method best meet the needs of the student?

4. Qualifications of development team: List of qualifications of team members involved in creating this course/mode of study.

5. Documentation of permission to use copyrighted material (if appropriate). All forms of media that was not originally created by your agency or company, must have proof of usage approval (including, but not limited to, text, graphics, animation, audio, and video).

6. Statement of security of delivery method – e.g., secure web site for sensitive material. Explanation of security protocol for your learning management system and participants to your site.

7. Instructor Resource Guide/Abstract: Specifics of the course to include:

a. Instructor information (if appropriate): qualifications, availability of instructor/Subject Matter Experts. The provider shall make instructors/Subject Matter Experts available to students for training content questions and concerns.
b. Target population
c. Pre-requisites for instructor and student
d. Special requirements
e. Timelines/student deadlines
f. Material requirements
g. Equipment requirements to successfully run program
h. Student materials and resource guides
i. Evaluation: How will student be graded?
j. Special instructions
k. Date of course development
l. Remediation plan
m. Course training materials (to include goals and learning objectives)
n. Reference materials

8. Lesson Plan: Lesson plan with measurable objectives. Lesson plan should outline a specific detailed description of the course, how the course is to be conducted, and method of assessment of the learning objectives.

9. Interactivity: Explanation of tools utilized to assist student in actively participating in the learning process (simulations, audio/video clips, knowledge checks, activities, chat rooms, etc.)

10. Learning Management System Information: Explain system being utilized and who will have access. The provider shall have a Learning Management System (LMS) which supports the method of training delivery. The LMS shall have sufficient data security to ensure privacy and protect personal student information. The LMS shall provide for unique student identification and tracking of individual student performance. The provider shall also have a system for records back-up and data retention.

11. TCOLE course access: Login and password information so course can be accessed for review

12. Contact number for IT representative: Contact for review if needed for access information. The provider shall also explain the process for providing student technical support for courses which rely on technology for content delivery.

13. Explanation of evaluation/testing protocol: How will student knowledge of the learning objectives be measured (group discussion, scenario-based, written tests, etc.)?

14. Process for course updates: How will the course be updated to remain current?

15. Application/review fee (per current fee schedule on TCOLE website)

Proposal packets should be sent to the Special Services Division Chief for addendum consideration or to the Director of Operations for new contract approval consideration. Upon approval, submitted materials will be transferred to the Education and Training Department for review.

Note: If you are currently under a contract with TCOLE and would like to be considered for a distance education component, you will apply via the addendum process until which time your contract is under renewal consideration. If you do not have a current contract or your contract has lapsed you will need to apply via new contract provisions.

Curriculum development staff will review the submitted materials in the order received and will complete the review process as promptly as duties allow. Results of the review will be forwarded to the Special Services Division Chief for final decision. The training provider will then be notified of addendum or course approval/denial decision.

If approved, the addendum or letter of course approval will be sent to department requesting review and signature. The signed copy is to be returned to Special Services Division Chief within 30 days and prior to any distance learning programs commencing.

If denied, a letter outlining the reason(s) for denial will be sent to the applicant. A written appeal of the denial can be submitted to the Special Services Division Chief within 30 days. The appeal should request reconsideration with specific areas of disagreement listed, a detailed explanation and/or corrections.

If an agency/training provider wants to change an approved LMS, a letter, signed by the Chief Administrator, must be submitted to TCOLE that includes:

- A statement that the new LMS meets or exceeds the standards of the current Distance Education Manual.
- Name of the currently approved LMS, name and date of the new LMS the agency/training provider wants to utilize.
- TCOLE course access: Login and password information so course can be accessed for review.
- Contact number for IT representative: Contact for review if needed for access information. The provider shall also explain the process for providing student technical support for courses which rely on technology for content delivery.

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ANNEX 1

Inappropriate Course Materials for Distance Learning

The following TCOLE courses are **examples** of courses either characterized as licensing courses or contain learning objectives which require the student to demonstrate a skill. As such, they are deemed inappropriate for distance learning delivery. However, this does not necessarily prevent the course from being delivered in a blended model. **These are only examples and not an inclusive list.** Refer to page 5 for further explanation.

TCOLE #	Course Title
1007	Basic County Jail Course
1009	Basic Investigative Hypnosis
1013	Basic Telecommunications Certification Course
1014	Basic Instructor Course
1015	Drug Recognition Expert Instructor Course
1016	S.F.S.T. Instructor
1017	Advanced Instructor Course
2012	Arson Investigator
2017	Crime Scene Investigation
2029	Technical Interviewing & Interrogation
2040	Defensive Tactics
2042	Mechanics of Arrest & Search
2045	Patrol Procedures
2046	Driving
2047	Officer Survival/Weapon Retention
2050	S.W.A.T. (other than 3301 or 3310)
2051	Terrorism/Dignitary Protection/Special Threats
2052	Hostage Negotiations
2053	Baton (All)
2054	Radar
2055	Firearms
2058	Patrol with Horse or Canine
2064	Courtroom Security
2065	Lidar Radar Training
2067	S.F.S.T. Practitioner
2075	Traffic Direction
2080	Drug Recognition Expert Pre-School

2081	Drug Recognition Expert Classroom
2082	Drug Recognition Expert Certification
2083	Drug Recognition Expert In-Service Training
2086	Jail Extraction
2106	Crime Scene Investigation (Intermediate)
2121	Domestic Canine Training for Law Enforcement
2176	S.F.S.T. NHTSA 24hour Practitioner - BPOC
2177	S.F.S.T. Instructor Update
2178	S.F.S.T. Practitioner Update
2180	NHTSA - ARIDE
2181	NHTSA - DITEP
2222	Firearms Instructor Certification
2401	CSO & PO Firearms (TDCJ)
2402	Juvenile Probation Officer Firearms
3104	Tire Deflation Device Training
3105	Executive Protection Training
3210	Cybercrime Investigator Certification
3269	SAFVIC TCPus Instructor Course
3295	Reality Based Training/Shoot House
3301	Basic S.W.A.T. Course
3302	Basic Hostage Negotiation Course
3304	Hostage and Barricade Suspect Situations
3305	Active Shooter Response
3306	Tactical Tracking
3307	Search and Rescue
3308	Officer Safety/Survival
3310	SWAT In-service Training
3311	ALERRT
3312	ALERRT Update
3313	ALERRT Terrorism Response Tactics - Active Shooter
3314	ALERRT Terrorism Response Tactics - Active Shooter
3315	ALERRT Terrorism Response Tactics - Active Shooter
3316	ALERRT First Responder Operations in Rural Terrain
3317	ALERRT First Responder Breaching
3318	ALERRT First Responders Operating in Low-Light
3319	ALERRT Plain Clothes Response to Violent Encounter
3321	Technical Emergency Response CBRNE Incidents

3322	Patrol Rifle
3323	Patrol Rifle Instructor
3324	SWAT Sniper Training
3325	Precision Rifle
3326	Patrol Rifle In-service Training (not3322)
3327	Low Light Tactical Operations Training
3329	SWAT-Use of Distraction Devices
3334	Firearms Electronic Simulator
3338	Law Enforcement Ambush Response
3340	Crowd Control
3341	Police K9 Training
3342	Tactical Firearms Training
3343	Less Lethal Chemical Weapons Training (OC, Mace, etc.)
3344	Less Lethal Electronic Control Device Training
3345	Less Lethal Impact Weapons Training (Bean Bag/Impact)
3346	Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT)
3347	Less Lethal Electronic Control Device Update
3348	Simunition Scenario
3349	Stop Stick
3350	Vehicle Disabling Device
3358	Police Bicycle
3359	Police Motorcycle
3360	Segway Training
3361	Armored Vehicle Driving Course
3362	All-Terrain Vehicle Operation
3404	Traffic Stops
3405	Motorcycle Safety and Enforcement Training (MSET)
3406	MSET Train the Trainer
3412	Fugitive Apprehension
3523	Inmate Transport
3599	Jail Firearms Course
3720	Telecommunications Operator Field Training Program
3721	County Correction Officer Field Training Course
3722	Peace Officer Field Training
3806	Hazardous Materials (Haz-Mat)/ Haz-Mat Investigations
3821	Diversionary Device Training
3823	Tactical Operators Training

3829	Tactical First Aid
3830	General First Aid Training
3831	Basic Life Support American Heart Association
3832	Heartsaver Automated External Defibrillation AHA
3835	Tactical Trauma Care
3840	CIT - Train the Trainer
3841	Crisis Intervention Training
3842	CIT - BPOC (16 hours)
3843	CIT - Update
3845	CPR
3851	Breathalyzer / Intoxilyzer
3856	First Aid / EMT / ECA (not course 3830)
3863	Explosive Breaching
3864	Manual Breaching
3865	Ballistic Breaching
3872	Scuba Emergency Management Training
3889	Tactical Maritime Based Operations Training
3890	Public Safety Diver, General
3891	Water Rescue
3892	Underwater Recovery - Persons
3893	Underwater Evidence Recovery
3894	Basic Scuba for Law Enforcement
3895	Basic Boat Operations
3922	Off Duty Encounters
3950	DARE Officer Training
3951	DARE Instructor Course
3952	School Based Law Enforcement - Basic
3953	School Based Law Enforcement - Intermediate
3955	G.R.E.A.T. Program Training
3960	Marine Safety Enforcement Officer
3961	Marine Safety Enforcement Officer Instructor (TPWD)
3962	Basic Scout School (TPWD)
3963	BOAT Airboat Operations Course (TPWD)
3964	BOAT Officer Water Survival Course (TPWD)
3965	BOAT Tactical Operators Course (TPWD)
3966	BOAT Operator/Crew Pursuit and Stop Course (TPWD)
3967	BOAT Operations/Crew Search and Rescue Course (TPWD)

3968	BOAT Basic Operator/Crew member Course (TPWD)
3969	MSLEP Maritime Security Course
4001	Mental Health Officer Training Course
4002	Mental Health Peace Officer Distance Education
4005	Fingerprints Latent
4007	Identi-Kit
4011	Photography
4012	Police Photography (Advanced)
4013	Polygraph Examiner
4018	Armorer/Gunsmith
4019	Blood Stain/Pattern Interpretation
4029	Aircraft Operations
4031	Tactical Flight Observer Training
4043	Mobile Video Training
6014	Tactical Entry Training
6016	Security Awareness (General)
6017	Reducing Impaired Driving Adult/Youth
6018	Motorcycle Operators Course
6030	Tactical Vehicle Traffic Stops & Extractions
6031	Child Safety Seat Instruction and Enforcement
6032	Assessment Center and Oral Board Preparation
6037	Honor Guard Training
6047	Forensic Art Training
6048	Canine Handlers Training
7771	Barricades and Cover
7818	TNOA Tactical Shooting Challenge TNOA
7819	Mass Casualty Training / Planning
7820	Security Awareness Training (Securing the Human)
7823	Law Enforcement Boat Operations
21003	Court Screening Basics
21006	Court Security Practical Exercise
36012	Cross Fit Trainer Level 1
38715	Public Speaking
38721	Advanced Instructional Techniques
38763	SABA (Self Aid, Buddy Aid)
52001	Introduction to Operational Medicine
57009	EVOC

57011	Officer Survival.
57012	RADAR - Operations and Use
58001	Tactical Emergency Medical Peace Officer - Basic
58002	Tactical First Aid - PerSys Medical
61000	FAA - Aircraft Ramp Check Ops for LE
62040	Defensive Tactics - Canine Encounters (Proprietary)
62041	K-9 Encounters Texas Specific - Shoot Don't Shoot
62042	Defensive Tactics: Canine Encounters - Train the Trainer
80032	School Marshal
80033	Update School Marshal

REVISIONS:

12/5/2017: Page 8. Change of LMS information added.