

The North Carolina Judicial College

History.

Current JBE program in North Carolina

The current JBE program is well established. Nearly all judicial branch officials have the opportunity to attend educational programs designed to help them improve their ability to perform their jobs. The Committee believes the current JBE program is working effectively in many areas. It does a good job of training court officials in legal and technical aspects of their jobs. It meets the mandatory training requirements for all officials. It provides quality orientation programs for most elected officials and for many support staff and non-judicial officials who work in the court system.

The current program has some gaps, however. It does little to help groups within the courts to work effectively as a team, to understand others' roles, or to appreciate the benefit of working to achieve systemic goals. It does relatively little to educate the "whole person," which would require more opportunities for reflection on the values and attitudes that undergird the daily work of the courts. Its programs for developing interpersonal skills are not well developed or available to most employees. It does not have programs specifically designed to address the needs of officials at all stages of their careers. For some groups, it provides far too little training even in basic job skills. The most glaring example is the lack of training for assistant and deputy clerks of court. Finally, the current program does not adequately equip court officials to deal effectively with the changing world in which they must work.

Mission. The North Carolina Judicial College will provide effective learning-centered education and training to judicial branch personnel to develop the abilities and values necessary to provide justice.

Mandate. The North Carolina Judicial College, working cooperatively with the AOC, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the judicial officials served by the College is responsible for developing, overseeing and evaluating a comprehensive educational program for judicial officials and their support staff.

Governance. The College is part of the IOG, which is an administrative unit of the School of Government of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It is advised by a thirteen-member advisory committee. The committee is constituted as follows:

1. Supreme Court Justice or Court of Appeals Judge, appointed by the Chief Justice
2. Superior Court Judge, selected by the Superior Court Judges Conference
3. District Court Judge, selected by the District Court Judges Association
4. Clerk of Superior Court, selected by the Clerks Association
5. Magistrate, selected by the Magistrates Association
6. District attorney, selected by the Conference of District Attorneys
7. Indigent Defense Services representative, selected by the Indigent Defense Services Commission

8. At-large member from the courts - representing employees from judicial support services and other support staff, appointed by the Chief Justice
9. Trial court administrator, selected by the Court Administrator's Association
10. AOC Director or Senior Deputy Director
11. AOC staff member designated by the director of the AOC
12. Adult educator, appointed by the Chief Justice
13. Member of the public representing the customers' perspective, appointed by the Chief Justice

The advisory committee members will serve three-year staggered terms. If a person who serves in a representative capacity resigns, retires, or is removed from the position he or she held at the time of the appointment, a vacancy is created and the appointing authority may select a successor to serve the remainder of the term.

The College is led by a Director, who is an employee and faculty member of the IOG. The Dean of the School of Government, after consulting with the Chief Justice and the Director of the AOC, appoints the Director. The College will have staff support as resources allow. It may use subcommittees to advise and conduct specific programs or groups of programs as appropriate.

The Director of the College will report on a regular basis to the Chief Justice, the State Judicial Council and the Director of the AOC on the needs, activities and programs of the Judicial College.

Governing educational principles. The educational programming of the College will, when fully developed, include pre-service and orientation learning opportunities for new officials and employees to help them make the transition to public service, continuing education programs for all, and specialized learning experiences for officials and employees as they develop in their careers. The College will utilize educational principles that promote effective adult learning in all its programming. Among those principles are the following:

1. Education and training that is focused on the learner's needs, and takes into account the fact that in any group a variety of learning styles are likely to be represented.
2. Educational programs that provide life-long educational opportunities throughout the stages of a person's career, and that are timed to provide the opportunity to learn when it is most appropriate.
3. Intentionally designed curricula, designed after a systematic determination of the core competencies each group of officials needs and an assessment of each group's educational needs in meeting those competencies.
4. Systematic evaluation of the extent to which the participants in educational programming are gaining the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to do their jobs.
5. Design of educational programs to insure that the participants interact with the teachers, and with each other, in appropriate settings.
6. Insuring that educational programming provides opportunities for informal sharing of experiences with colleagues and others.

Development and support of the faculty, both employed by the College or volunteers, who provide the instruction and leadership to the educational programs.

Curriculum. The College will develop a curriculum that addresses the needs of its learners. When fully in place, it will have an annual plan and course schedules. The curriculum will address the following areas:

- Law
- Basic Job Skills
- Cultural Competency and Diversity Issues
- Societal Issues (scientific, human relations, medical, psychological, etc.) that affect the courts.
- Court Administration & Management
- Employee/Personal Development
- Dealing with Change
- Leadership Development

Program Delivery Methods. The educational programming may include conferences, seminars, regional and local programs, distance-learning activities, or individualized learning programs, or any other formats, as appropriate. Some programs will focus on the work of one occupational group, but others may involve people from many different positions. The College will determine the best methods for delivering an effective program and, over time, the specifics of the delivery system will change to meet the needs of the courts.