

**A Study of Modernized Personnel Training in Corrections:
An Assessment of the Correctional Officer
Pre-Service Training in Texas**

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Applied Research Project

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The rising STAR of Texas

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not represent the views of any governmental agency.

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose for this applied research project is threefold. First, it explores and describes the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assesses the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Method: This study uses a case study methodology. This case study utilized a single method of data collection called document analysis. Analyzing documents provided the opportunity to review and analyze the existing content that is covered during the correctional officer pre-service training with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

Findings: The results indicate evidence to support the presence of six out of the eleven elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. Of the Offender Management Training component, the following four elements indicate evidence of support: (1) observing offender movements and reading situations, (2) sexual abuse awareness, (3) special inmate populations, and (4) recognizing manipulation. Of the Prison Environment and Cultural Training component, the following two elements indicate evidence of support: (5) prison culture and correctional officer 'working personality' and (6) prison environment and working conditions. However, there is no evidence to support the presence of five out of the eleven elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. Of the Offender Management Training component, the following three elements indicate no evidence of support: (1) basic counseling, (2) risk-need-responsivity and case management, and (3) substance abuse awareness. Of the Interpersonal Skills Training component, the following two elements indicate no evidence of support: (4) identification and definitions of interpersonal skills and (5) strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills. The TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training program could be improved if all of the components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program were present.

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About the Author

Katherine B. Miller is a non-profit professional who has worked in a variety of positions that have interfaced with individuals who were incarcerated and as well as other individuals who were in the process of reintegrating into society upon their release from incarceration. Katherine worked as a Job Readiness Trainer at a local county jail in Texas where she provided inmates with training to learn the knowledge, tools, and skills to complete a successful job search upon their release from incarceration. In addition to this experience, Katherine also worked as a Grant Project Coordinator where she supervised staff and facilitated the implementation of a Federal Department of Labor Second Chance Act grant. The grant funded a workforce development program that provided employment case management, job readiness training, and career navigation services to individuals who were recently released from incarceration.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Over the last few decades, the United States has created the biggest prison system on the planet that is driven primarily by policies that place enormous faith in the ability to control crime through incarceration (Pratt 2009, 3). Although the number of inmates in our correctional facilities has presented a slight decrease over the last few years, there was still an estimated 2.2 million people incarcerated in U.S. adult correctional systems at the end of 2013 (Glaze and Kaeble 2014). Figure 1.1 shows the estimated number of people incarcerated in U.S. adult correctional systems each year in 2000, 2005, and 2010-2013.

Figure 1.1 Estimated Number of Persons Incarcerated by Adult Correctional Systems in the United States, 2000, 2005, 2010-2013



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Surveys of Probation, Parole, Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jail Inmates, and National Prisoner Statistics Program, 2000, 2005, and 2010-2013.

With the growth of the U.S. incarcerated population over the last twenty years, there has been a growing interest in evaluating the impact correctional officers have on the inmate

population. Upon the beginning of a correctional officer's career, there is a required correctional officer pre-service training for all new staff prior to placement in the field. This correctional officer pre-service training is intended to prepare the new employees for all aspects of their role as a correctional officer. With the growth of the inmate population and the need to properly supervise these individuals in preparation for eventual release, there has been a growing trend in many correctional facilities to update the correctional officer pre-service training. This update to the correctional officer pre-service training would better equip correctional officers with the tools, knowledge, and skills required to achieve the goals of a modernized correctional facility. This research study evaluates the correctional officer pre-service training that is provided to new correctional officers as they enter the field of corrections in the state of Texas.

The Role of the Correctional Officer

Over the last two decades there has been a shift in the role of the correctional officer. While in the past the focus had been strictly centered on security, the new role of the correctional officer is to lead offenders away from crime (Durnescu and McNeill 2014, 30). In order to accommodate changes in the inmate population, there have been many policy reforms aimed at the changing dynamics in the criminal justice system over the last 20 years. There is, however, little evidence to suggest a similar emphasis on changing correctional facilities or adapting the correctional officer's ability to respond to the changing inmate population (Kifer, Hemmens, and Stohr 2003). Without this knowledge it is unclear whether new roles assigned to correctional officers are being effectively accomplished.

The role of the correctional officer has been cited as one of the most important responsibilities in any correctional agency (Josi and Sechrest 1998, 33). "Poorly trained officers with no prior experience are a threat to themselves and others on the staff" (Josi and Sechrest

1998, 33). Research also highlights the impact that corrections officers have on the inmates as facilitators of control as well as engagement (Bales 1997). Bales (1997) argued that “...correctional officers are the most important employee in inmate’s lives” (10). In order for correctional officers to maintain engagement with inmates and also to adapt to the challenges and changes facing corrections, Josi and Sechrest (1998) suggest that organizations “...need to place greater emphasis on career development through training and education” (33).

Over the last twenty years, the role of the corrections officer has been significantly under-researched (Durnescu and McNeill 2014). More specifically, Durnescu and McNeill (2014) also emphasize that “...research on the topic of training correctional officers is limited” (42). With the extraordinarily high volume of inmates in the United States, there is evidence to suggest the need for a more contemporary role of the correctional officer that incorporates the changing dynamics in the criminal justice system. Correctional officer training should facilitate the move to a contemporary role.

Research Purpose

This research study intends to fill a gap in practice literature by exploring the ideal components of a correctional officer pre-service training. Since Texas has more inmates than any other state, it was deemed appropriate for this research study to evaluate the pre-service training for correctional officers with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

The purpose for this applied research project is threefold. First, it explores and describes the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assesses the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides

recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter one provides an introduction to research on the changing dynamics of the U.S. correctional systems over the last twenty years and the role of the correctional officer. The chapter also states the research purpose. Chapter summaries are also provided.

Chapter two examines scholarly literature on the components of a modernized pre-service training for correctional officers. The first part of the chapter provides some context on the changing dynamics in the field of criminal justice and the evolution of the role of the correctional officer. It also develops the components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program (conceptual framework).

Chapter three describes the setting for this research study by providing information and details about the correctional officer pre-service training program with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

Chapter four describes the research methodology used to assess the correctional officer pre-service training with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). This chapter also discussed the operationalization of the conceptual framework and examines some of the advantages and disadvantages of document analysis.

Chapter five provides the results of the document analysis of the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training program.

Chapter six provides recommendations and conclusions based on the TDCJ case study. The chapter also provides information on possible biases associated with this research as well as suggestions for future research are also presented in this section.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Chapter Purpose

This chapter explores and describes the literature on the content of training for employees entering the field of corrections. The first section of the chapter provides historical context and information about criminal justice systems in the United States. The next section reviews changes in correctional philosophy and recent trends in prison systems which justifies the need for a modernized pre-service training for new correctional officers. The final section explores the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program.

Historical Context – Criminal Justice and Corrections in the United States

At the turn of the twenty-first century, over two million Americans found themselves behind bars (Alexander 2012, 58). Despite the fact that the population of inmates is growing to an all-time high, there had been little emphasis on modernizing and unifying correctional philosophies or solidifying the role of the correctional officer to achieve the goals of corrections. In order for the field of corrections in the United States to achieve their goals, "...it is important to ascertain what correctional personnel believe the goal of corrections should be, as they are the 'street level bureaucrats' who deliver (or fail to deliver) policy in the correctional setting" (Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr 2003, 48).

In the "get-tough" era of the 1990s, "it became standard belief that rehabilitation did not work and should not be the guiding theory of corrections. Those who stood up for rehabilitation...were either politely dismissed as bleeding hearts or vigorously attacked" (Cullen 2001, 5). Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr (2003) argue that, "...public and policy makers support

incapacitation and retribution as the primary goals of corrections. However, it is uncertain whether correctional personnel believe in these same goals” (48). During the first decade of the 21st century, the goal of corrections has started shifting its’ focus to engage in efforts that assist offenders in moving away from crime (Durnescu and McNeill 2014). According to Durnescu and McNeill (2014), “...correctional personnel [are] moving from being ‘guards’ to being seen as a person with a significant role in working towards effecting behavioral change in inmates” (37). In order to determine whether correctional facilities reduce recidivism and control crime through incarceration, there has been a growing interest in evaluating the role of correctional officers and their impact on the inmate population.

Recent Goals in Correctional Systems

The field of criminal justice is one of the largest industries in the United States. With correctional facilities across the United States employing more than 400,000 people, “...staff are the single largest expense for most correctional agencies, often accounting for more than 75% of the annual budget” (Lambert et al. 2008, 56). Lambert et al. (2008) suggest that, “...correctional workers represent the single most important resource available to any correctional agency or institution in attempting to accomplish its mission, goals, and objectives” (56). With such a large resource of staff available to accomplish each correctional agency’s goals, Cullen (2011) argues that, “...we must step up and proclaim that corrections is a profession that has its hallmarks both in deep ethic of care for offenders and for our communities and a commitment to treatment expertise – to knowing and doing what works” (17).

In order to accomplish the recent goals in criminal justice reform, correctional agencies have started training their correctional staff with new techniques to fulfill the responsibilities of

their job as they interact with the inmate population. One of the factors that has recently been incorporated into the training of new correctional officers is the introduction of offender management and interpersonal skills training. Additionally, the Canadian criminal justice system has been focusing on the impacts of training within the realm of case management of offenders using the risk-need-responsivity model (Durnescu and McNeill 2014, 30). This model is one of the strategies implemented across many correctional systems in order for correctional staff to assist with achieving the goal of reducing recidivism.

Conceptual Framework

Upon review of the current status of the criminal justice system and its goals with reducing recidivism, it is important to evaluate how correctional officers are being trained. Josi and Sechrest (1998) argue that as we move further into the twenty-first century, the need to place greater emphasis on career development through training and education will become more important (33). Josi and Sechrest (1998) discovered in a national survey that, "...there was wide variation in the length of pre-service training for correctional officers among state jurisdictions" (34). In order to identify the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program, this research has reviewed the literature, identified ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program, and utilized the practical ideal type research model to evaluate the current Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) pre-service training for new correctional officers.

In order to explore and describe the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program, the following categories were developed for this applied research project: (1) offender management training; (2) interpersonal skills training; and (3) prison environment and cultural training. If the current TDCJ pre-service training is not

presenting all of the practical ideal type components, it can be improved by incorporating the missing components.

1. Offender Management Training

Offender management training is the first category in the pre-service training conceptual framework. Offender management is categorized as the knowledge and skills needed to effectively observe, interact, and manage inmates in a correctional setting. The knowledge and skills gained by receiving offender management training can equip new correctional officers with tools needed to accomplish correction goals. The seven elements in this category include: (1) observing offender movements/reading situations; (2) methods of basic counseling; (3) risk-need-responsivity (RNR) and case management skills; (4) substance abuse awareness; (5) sexual abuse awareness (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates); (6) interacting with special inmate populations (specifically inmates with disabilities and/or mental health issues); and (7) recognizing manipulation (con games).

1.1 Observing Offender Movements and Reading Situations

First, offender management training should include observing offender movements and reading situations. Bales (1997) states that "...correctional officers probably are the most important employee in inmates' lives" (10). Since correctional officers are so actively involved with the inmates' lives, officers can start to pick up on subtle inmate actions, reactions, and interactions (Bales 1997, 10). Durnescu and McNeill (2014) also note that while security and physical control are key components of offender management, there is a greater reliance on knowing the inmates through interactions and surveillance (36). This ability to effectively observe offender movement and to read situations in a correctional setting is a critical component

of offender management for correctional officers. Learning the skills of observing offender movement and reading situations is an essential component of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training because it allows the correctional officer to maintain safety and security while also working towards effecting behavioral change in inmates (Durnescu and McNeill 2014).

1.2 Basic Counseling

Second, offender management training should incorporate the methods of basic counseling. Durnescu and McNeill (2014) suggest that, "...enhanced correctional officer training in human behavior and social science was supported now by an approach to both prison design and offender management that demanded correctional officers with some background, training and possibly experience in human behavioral intervention, conflict resolution, and ways to encourage positive behavior" (37). This additional training for correctional officers in human behavioral intervention is intended to assist with the goals of moving offenders away from their typical criminal thinking patterns of their past. This type of training on the basic methods of counseling "...reflects a change in the role of the security staff toward the increasing focus on the use of communication and counseling skills in dealing with inmates..." (37). Josi and Sechrest (1998) agree that the pre-service training academy curriculum for new correctional officers should include a section on the basic methods of counseling (37).

1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity and Case Management

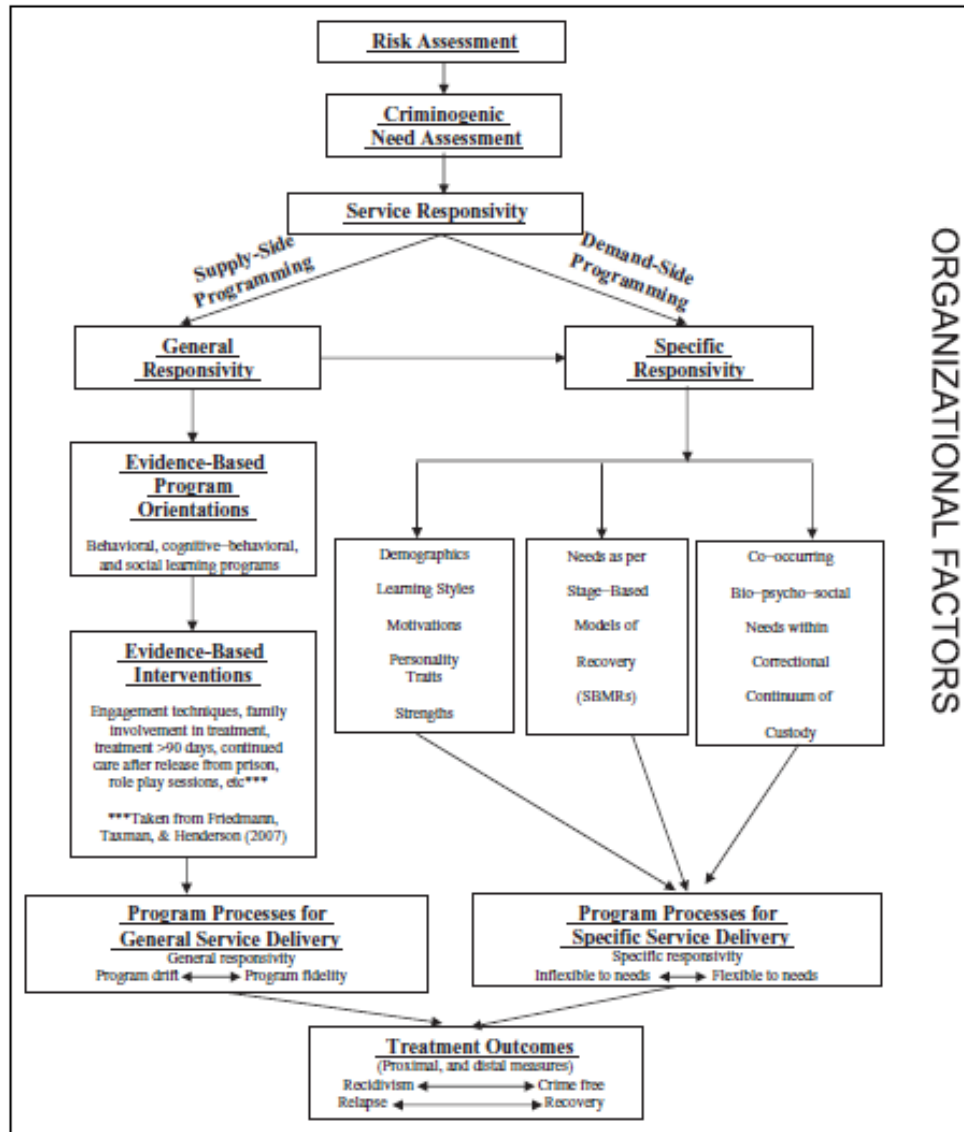
Thirdly, offender management training should cover risk-need-responsivity (RNR) and case management skills. Cullen (2011) argues that, "...there is one paradigm that...has the most legitimacy and should be the exemplar to be followed if we truly wish to make corrections work.

This is the risk-need-responsivity paradigm – the RNR model...” (16). Cullen (2011) explains that, “...RNR is not just another treatment modality. Instead, it is an overarching strategy for making corrections work effectively. It is a model that its proponents spent more than 30 years developing” (17). Jolley and Kerbs (2010) clarify that “...the RNR model is a prescription of evidence-based principles for what will reduce the likelihood of recidivism if RNR’s testable principles of effective intervention are applied with integrity” (281). Durnescu and McNeill (2014) reinforce that, “...if the RNR approach to case management is to be the main orientation of offender case management, then training for correctional officers is also essential” (41).

The RNR model starts with an initial risk assessment that examines the offender’s propensity for recidivism (Jolley and Kerbs 2010). Subsequently, inmates are assessed for their criminogenic needs, such as the factors that drive their propensity for criminal activity (Jolley and Kerbs 2010). After the completion of the risk and criminogenic needs assessments, the inmates are provided with responsive services aimed at alleviating the inmate of these risks and supporting their needs during the time of incarceration (Jolley and Kerbs 2010).

Figure 1 represents a model of service delivery that is based on an enhanced RNR perspective. Jolley and Kerbs (2010) explain that, “...the model tracks an inmate’s pathway within prison-based programming as she or he moves through and organizational context that has implemented the RNR principles into routine practice” (281).

Figure 2.1 Service delivery within an enhanced RNR Perspective



Source: Jolley, J. & Kerbs, J. (2010). Risk, need, and responsivity: Unrealized potential for the international delivery of substance abuse treatment in prison. *International Criminal Justice Review*, 20 (3), 280-301.

1.4 Substance Abuse Awareness

The fourth element in offender management training covers substance abuse awareness. Jolley and Kerbs (2010) argue that, “correctional studies from various nations...document high rates of substance abuse among prisoners and high rates of crime and recidivism among drug users” (280). “In the United States, over half of all federal inmates (55%) and about one fifth of all state inmates (21%) in 2004 had been incarcerated for drug law violations” (Jolley and Kerbs 2010, 281). With this high percentage of inmates facing substance use and addiction issues, one could argue the importance for correctional officers to be trained on the signs and symptoms of substance abuse within a correctional facility. Jolley and Kerbs (2010) advocate for the use of RNR principles in the treatment of drug addiction for inmates who have identified drug use as one of their criminogenic risks. Many countries have implemented the principles of RNR in policies and programs guiding the delivery of drug treatment services to offenders supervised in the community and to inmates in state- and federal-level prisons (Jolley and Kerbs 2010, 281). In order for inmates to participate in these drug treatment programs, correctional officers should be involved in the referral process once an inmate is identified as having substance abuse issues. Josi and Sechrest (1998) agree that the pre-service training academy curriculum for new correctional officers should include a section on substance abuse awareness (37).

1.5 Sexual Abuse Awareness

The fifth element in offender management training should cover sexual abuse awareness (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates). “The adage ‘out of sight, out of mind’ has been used to characterize one particularly dark aspect of inmate life – the problem of prison rape” (Thompson, Nored and Dial 2008, 414). Research studies have examined more than 2,700

correctional facilities holding 79% of all adult and juveniles in custody, totaling 1,754,092 incarcerated individuals (Thompson, Nored and Dial 2008, 415). “Of those correctional facilities, 8,210 allegations of sexual violence were reported in 2004. The vast majority of those incidents that were reported were allegations of staff sexual misconduct (42%). Thirty-seven percent of incidents reported were inmate-on-inmate nonconsensual sexual acts” (Thompson, Nored and Dial 2008, 415).

In order to combat against this institutional problem of sexual violence in jails and prisons, the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was signed into law in 2003 by President Bush and nonpartisan Congressional efforts (Jenness and Smyth 2011). Although PREA has many objectives, the main goal is to provide information, resources, recommendations, and funding to protect individuals from prison rape (Jenness and Smyth 2011, 490). Prior to the passage of PREA, a special report from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) “...outlined a three-pronged approach to addressing sexual misconduct in corrections” (Jenness and Smyth 2011, 510). One of these approaches was to create a three-hour video that, “...promoted the development of professional standards for institutional response to what had been identified as a pervasive problem within the industry” (Jenness and Smyth 2011, 510).

Marquart (2005) questioned, “...what was it about the prison context that would induce prison employees to become friends with, confidants of, and in extreme cases, lovers of prisoners” (223)? There may be manipulation occurring on behalf of the inmate but there is also misconduct occurring from correctional staff in all cases of staff-on-inmate sexual acts. “Although there are explicit rules and policies designed to prohibit personal interactions between staff members and inmates, there are nevertheless offenders who persist in attempting to

minimize the social boundary between themselves and prison employees” (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003, 177). Whether is it inmate-on-inmate or staff-on-inmate sexual misconduct, there is a need for “...staff training and sensitivity regarding the problem of prison rape [as] an essential prerequisite to its elimination. Staff must be capable of recognizing the signs and symptoms of sexually aggressive behavior and victimization” (Thompson, Nored and Dial 2008, 419).

1.6 Special Inmate Populations

Prisons and jails are filled with inmates that have disabilities and mental health issues. The sixth element in offender management training should cover knowledge about how to interact with special inmate populations, specifically inmates with disabilities and/or mental health issues. Vogel, Stephens and Siebels (2014) write that, “mentally ill persons are disproportionately represented at all stages of the criminal justice system, from arrest to conviction to incarceration. It has been estimated that 20 percent of state prisoners and 21 percent of jail inmates have a recent history of mental illness” (627). Additionally, “the number of inmates with a serious mental illness has been steadily increasing since the 1980s” (Vogel, Stephens and Siebels 2014, 627). As inmates with mental health issues are entering the criminal justice system, it is imperative that these individuals are receiving treatment for their mental illness during their time of incarceration. However, “...even though all federal prisons and most state prisons and jails now provide some form of mental health services to inmates, most inmates with mental illness never receive treatment while in custody. In fact, less than one quarter of federal inmates and one third of state inmates with mental health problems receive treatment for their mental illness” (Smith 2012, 498). Smith (2012) argues that, “in order for treatment to be

both available to and beneficial for persons with mental illness in custody, prison staff must be trained to identify symptoms that require acute care” (520). Smith (2012) goes on to claim that, “...in cases in which symptoms of mental illness are not observed prior to entry into custody but emerge after a period of time in prison, staff must have sufficient training to identify symptoms and facilitate referrals for appropriate evaluations and necessary treatment” (520). Josi and Sechrest (1998) agree that the pre-service training academy curriculum for new correctional officers should include a section on how to deal with special inmate populations (e.g. “the mentally and physically challenged”) (37).

1.7 Recognizing Manipulation

The seventh element in offender management training should cover how to recognize manipulation and con games. Crawley (2004) argued that, “...prison officers must perform and manage emotion on a day-to-day basis” (424). Part of managing emotions involves correctional officers remaining emotionally detached while at work or else risking the chance that they may be taken advantage of by the inmates that they are supervising (Crawley 2004). “Even officers who strive to work positively with such prisoners often find it difficult to manage feelings of anger and disgust; similarly they may feel guilty when feelings of empathy do emerge” (Crawley 2004, 418). Worley, Marquart and Mullings (2003) state that “...little systemic research has examined the process by which incarcerated individuals solicit correctional staff to break the rules and make attempts to develop relationships, which could only be deemed as improper” (177). However, Worley, Marquart and Mullings (2003) suggest that there are “...five varieties of offenders that attempt to form inappropriate relationships with correctional staff members: ‘observers,’ ‘contacts,’ ‘runners,’ ‘point-men,’ and ‘turners’” (178). “Observers” are inmates

who watch and listen to staff members to determine which employees might be susceptible to manipulation (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). These offenders provide critical information to other inmates who actually initiate manipulation (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). “Contacts” are prisoners that ascertain personal details about an employee’s life and passes the information along to other inmates (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). “Runners” test staff members by purposely violating the rules to gauge the employee’s reaction and willingness to enforce the rules or use discretion (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). “Point-men” function as lookouts to alert other inmates who attempt to manipulate staff (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). Finally, “turners” are inmates who befriend employees and use that relationship to coerce employees into rule infractions (Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003). New correctional officers must be trained on how to recognize these signs of manipulation and the games that inmates play in order to avoid being influenced into violating the rules and procedures inside and outside the correctional facilities.

2. Interpersonal Skills Training

Interpersonal skills training is the second category in the new correctional officer ideal pre-service training model. It includes two elements: (1) identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer; and (2) strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff.

2.1 Identification and Definitions of Interpersonal Skills

First, the training should cover the identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer. Perry et al. (2013) define interpersonal skills as the conjunction between basic skills of communication and the communicators' attitudes and ability to empathize (p. 526). Interpersonal skills are the means through which all human relationships are initiated, negotiated, maintained, transformed, and resolved (Knapp and Daly 2011). Durnescu and McNeill (2004) suggest that, "...the existing focus on correctional training on interpersonal skills [is] a necessary aspect of custody work..." (31). "While security was still the primary concern, the way which secure control was executed was through interaction with inmates..." (Durnescu and McNeill 2004, 36). This argument suggests that interpersonal communication and interactions with inmates proved to be an effective way to ensure safety and security in the correctional setting. In contrast, "...the use of heightened security measures might cause interpersonal problems between inmates and staff in these facilities" (Trammell and Rundle 2015, 479). "By examining the ways that staff influence the inmates, we can also create more effective prison policies" (Trammell and Rundle 2015, 489).

Interpersonal skills can be categorized into three elements: (1) attitudes, (2) empathy, and (3) skills in communication, engagement, confidence, and adaptability to change (Perry et al. 2013). The research that Perry et al. (2013) conducted concluded that, "...when service users teach interpersonal skills, students' attitudes and practices become more holistic and person centered (p. 538). Teaching interpersonal skills is valuable in terms of developing skills, changing attitudes and increasing empathy (Perry et al. 2013). This type of interpersonal training

should be introduced to new correctional officers as they are entering the field of corrections to ensure the quality of safety and security for all inmates and staff.

2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills

The second element in interpersonal skills training includes strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff. Patrick (1998) researched the causes of inmate altercations and discovered that although the majority of inmates feel safe in this prison, they experienced altercations between inmates on a regular basis (261). Patrick (1998) recommends that “staff should be trained in conflict resolution to assist in reducing inmate stress levels” (262). Antonio, Young and Wingard (2009) suggest that, “...having line staff reinforce treatment services is a reasonable expectation, as correctional officers have constant inmate contact, their numbers are greater than those of treatment staff, and inmate supervision – often considered a chief responsibility of correctional officers – consists primarily of day-to-day informal verbal exchanges” (54). These informal verbal exchanges are a way of implementing and exhibiting interpersonal skills on a daily basis with inmates. Antonio, Young and Wingard (2009) recommend that correctional officers should, “...promote a good social environment, model positive behavior, and correct inappropriate behavior...” (65). While doing so, correctional officers should also “...be aware that each employee has the responsibility for reinforcing positive behavior including a basic understanding that inmates are always watching and learning from correctional staff regardless of job category” (Antonio, Young and Wingard 2009, 66). The following interpersonal skills strategies should be taught to new correctional officers as they are entering the field of corrections: effective conflict resolution, modeling positive behavior amongst inmates and other

correctional staff, correcting inappropriate behaviors, and promoting a good social environment in the correctional facility.

3. Prison Environment and Cultural Training

Prison environment and cultural training is the third major category of a model correctional officer pre-service training. It incorporates: (1) prison culture and correctional officer 'working personality'; and (2) prison environment and working conditions.

3.1 Prison Culture and Correctional Officer 'Working Personality'

First, prison environment and cultural training should cover knowledge about prison culture and correctional officer 'working personality.' According to Crawley (2004) there is an occupational ethos in which de-personalization and emotional detachment are distinctive features present in most prisons. Prison officers are expected to remain emotionally detached; they are warned during basic training not to get too friendly nor too relaxed with prisoners, on the grounds that this may lead to 'conditioning' and hence to compromises of security (420). Emotional detachment is a feature of the correctional officer 'working personality' that new recruits must learn and begin to portray as they begin their new role in the prison setting (Crawley 2004). A new correctional officer will learn this skill over time, but it is important that prison culture, how a correctional officer will behave in the correction setting, and the necessary boundaries with inmates are discussed during the correctional officer pre-service training program.

Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr (2003) suggest that, "...it is important to know correctional staff beliefs in order to find better ways to shape them, possibly through training or hiring practices" (48). "It is important to understand why correctional staff feel the way they do" (Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr 2003, 67). The prison culture and the mentality of the correctional staff can influence and adapt the 'working personality' of all staff in the correctional setting over time. When the culture within a correctional setting changes, correctional administrators need to be able to plan their hiring and training accordingly (Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr 2003, 67).

3.2 Prison Environment and Working Conditions

Secondly, prison environment and cultural training should cover knowledge about prison environment and working conditions. Lambert, Hogan and Griffin (2008) describe correctional institutions as unique work environments in both context and purpose (57). Due to the nature of this unique work environment, it is important that new correctional officers are trained about the dynamics of the correctional environment and the conditions they will be working in. Lambert, Hogan and Griffin (2008) describe that, "...the primary purpose of the prison organization is to process, manipulate, and ultimately exert total control over a large group of individuals. Few other organizations are charged with the central task of supervising and securing an unwilling and potentially violent population. It is often a boring, routine job, punctuated by periods of crisis" (57). A significant body of research has examined the development of the prison environment, the processes by which prisons function, and the role of the correctional officer within this organization. Correctional workers play a significant role in influencing the institutional environment; it is also evident that the correctional environment significantly affects staff" (Lambert, Hogan and Griffin 2008). Lambert (2004) suggests that it is crucial for new

correctional officers to understand how correctional work environments will affect them as they start working in this field (209). Additionally, Wright (2005) acknowledges prisons as a, “...’fear-based culture’ characterized by a cliqued, selective sharing of critical information, abuse of power and position, codes of silence, and even intimidation, among other factors” (23). This negative prison culture permeates the environment, impacting both staff and inmates, and can be seen as the backdrop to a host of prison problems ranging from poor staff morale to abuse of inmates and a high volume of inmate violence (Wright 2005). Due to the unique nature of the prison environment, it is essential that the working conditions and work environment are thoroughly discussed to new correctional officers prior to their placement in the field.

Summary of the Conceptual Framework

This applied research project intends to fill a gap in practice literature by evaluating the documents that support the pre-service training provided to new correctional officers prior to their start of employment within a correctional facility. Table 2.1 below summarizes the practical ideal type components used to assess the correctional officer pre-service training in Texas.

Table 2.1: Conceptual Framework Linked to the Literature

Title:	A Study of Modernized Personnel Training in Corrections: An Assessment of the Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training in Texas	
Purpose:	The purpose for this applied research project is threefold. First, it explores and describes the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assesses the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	
	Practical Ideal Type Components	Literature
1. Offender Management Training		
1.1 Observing offender movements/reading situations		Bales 1997; Durnescu and McNeill 2014
1.2 Methods of basic counseling		Durnescu and McNeill 2014; Josi and Sechrest 1998
1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) and case management skills		Cullen 2011; Durnescu and McNeill 2014; Jolley and Kerbs 2010
1.4 Substance abuse awareness		Jolley and Kerbs 2010; Josi and Sechrest 1998
1.5 Sexual abuse awareness (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates)		Jeness and Smyth 2011; Marquart 2005; Thompson, Nored and Dial 2008; Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003
1.6 Interacting with special inmate populations (specifically inmates with disabilities and/or mental health issues)		Josi and Sechrest 1998; Smith 2012; Vogel, Stephens and Siebels 2014
1.7 Recognizing manipulation (con games)		Crawley 2004; Worley, Marquart and Mullings 2003
2. Interpersonal Skills Training		
2.1 Identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer		Durnescu and McNeill 2014; Knapp and Daly 2011; Perry et al. 2013; Trammell and Rundle 2015
2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff		Antonio, Young and Wingard 2009; Patrick 1998
3. Prison Environment and Cultural Training		
3.1 Prison culture and correctional officer ‘working personality’		Crawley 2004; Kifer, Hemmens and Stohr 2003;
3.2 Prison environment and working conditions		Lambert 2004; Lambert, Hogan and Griffin 2008; Wright 2005

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined key literature on modernized content to include in the training for new correctional officers entering the field of corrections. With the changes in correctional philosophy and the role of the correctional officer being adapted over time, criminal justice agencies across the United States need to modernize their pre-service training for new correctional officers. By modernizing the pre-service training, new correctional officers entering the field of corrections will be better equipped to fulfill all expectations of their role in the 21st century. The next chapter discusses information about the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and its Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Program.

Chapter III: Setting

Chapter Purpose

This chapter provides information about the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and its Correctional Institutions Division that provides pre-service training for new correctional officers in Texas. This chapter also describes the qualifications and information about TDCJ correctional officers.

Overview of TDCJ

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) manages offenders in state prisons, state jails, and private correctional facilities that contract with TDCJ across the state of Texas (TDCJ website). Within TDCJ, the Correctional Institutions Division has a Prison and Jail Operations department that is responsible for the confinement of adult felony and state jail felony offenders who are sentenced to incarceration in a secure facility (TDCJ website). Currently, TDCJ manages 112 correctional facilities that collectively have the capacity to house approximately 143,642 inmates at any given time (TDCJ website).



Figure 3.1 displays the demographic information of inmates incarcerated in TDCJ facilities in 2014. As of August 31, 2014, there were 136,460 inmates incarcerated in TDCJ state prisons, 10,524 inmates incarcerated in TDCJ state jails, and 3,377 inmates incarcerated in a Substance Abuse Felony Punishment (SAFP) Facility for a total of 150,361 inmates (TDCJ Statistical Report 2014).

Figure 3.1 TDCJ Inmate Demographic Information

Demographic Highlights – August 31, 2014 TDCJ On Hand					
		Prison	State Jail	SAFP ¹	Total On Hand
Total		136,460	10,524	3,377	150,361
Gender	Male	127,567	8,140	2,440	138,147
	Female	8,893	2,384	937	12,214
Race	Black	47,827	3,562	730	52,119
	White	41,869	4,167	1,640	47,676
	Hispanic	46,050	2,755	995	49,800
	Other and Unknown Race	714	40	12	766
Average Age (Years)		38.6	35.3	34.6	38.3
Offense	Violent Offense	82,725	134	812	83,671
	Property Offense	17,053	5,267	813	23,133
	Drug Offense	18,973	3,881	1,151	24,005
	Other Offense	17,709	1,242	601	19,552
Average IQ		90.63	91.43	91.86	90.70
Average Educational Achievement Score		8.24	7.53	8.02	8.19
Custody	Administrative Segregation (1A – 8A)	6,564	N/A	N/A	6,564
	State Jail Segregation (SR)	N/A	99	N/A	99
	Safekeeping (P1 – 5)	1,638	1	N/A	1,639
	G/J4	9,500	318	N/A	9,818
	G/J1 – 3 and OT ²	108,011	9,202	N/A	117,213
	G/J5	3,948	66	N/A	4,014
	Other Custody	6,799	838	3,377	11,014
Average Sentence Length (Years) ³		19.2	1.0	N/A	17.9

Source: Texas Department of Criminal Justice Statistical Report Fiscal Year 2014. https://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/Statistical_Report_FY2014.pdf

TDCJ Pre-Service Training Program

In addition to prison and jail operations, the TDCJ Correctional Institutions Division has another department that oversees the hiring and training of correctional staff. This TDCJ department is called the Correctional Training and Staff Development (CTSD) department (TDCJ website). There are five programs offered by the CTSD department: (1) Pre-Service Training Program-Phase I; (2) In-Service Training Program; (3) Leadership Development Training Program; (4) Specialized Training Program; and (5) Ancillary Training Program (TDCJ website). The TDCJ Pre-Service Training Program consists of 216 hours of core instruction through the on-site training programs delivered by six regional training academies located in Huntsville, Palestine, Rosharon, Beeville, Plainview, and Gatesville, Texas (TDCJ website).



Qualifications and Information about TDCJ Correctional Officers

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice has over 100 prison units throughout the State and employs approximately 25,000 Correctional Officers (TDCJ website). In order to attend the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Program, all applicants must meet the minimum qualifications to become a correctional officer. The minimum qualifications are as follows:

TDCJ Correctional Officer Minimum Qualifications

A. Education, Experience, and Training

1. Graduation from an accredited senior high school or equivalent or GED.
2. Continued employment is contingent upon passing exams and skill tests in the TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-service Training Academy.

B. Knowledge and Skills

1. Skill to communicate ideas and instructions clearly and concisely.
2. Skill to coordinate with other staff, departments, officials, agencies, organizations, and the public.

The correctional officer position summary at TDCJ states that the role of the correctional officer to perform entry-level correctional work involving the care and custody of offenders (TDCJ CO job description). Correctional officer work involves training in officer and offender relations, security, and corrections management (TDCJ CO job description). The correctional officer will work under close supervision with minimal latitude for the use of initiative and independent judgment (TDCJ CO job description).

Texas correctional officers receive a total of 216 pre-service training hours, compared to the national average of 273 hours among state correctional agencies (Lowry 2014). Poorly prepared correctional officers may account for the extremely high turnover rates among new

employees (Lowry 2014). According to the Texas State Auditor, TDCJ correctional officers had a 24.6 percent turnover rate in fiscal year 2013 (Lowry 2014). In order to keep up with the demand of trained correctional staff in their facilities, TDCJ conducts multiple Pre-Service Training academies each year, usually every two weeks (TDCJ website). In 2015, CTSD conducted 173 Pre-Service Training academies and graduated a total of 5,692 participants (TDCJ website).



Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined information about the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and its Correctional Institutions Division Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Program. This chapter also describes the qualifications and information about the TDCJ correctional officers. The next chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study. It also describes the operationalization of the conceptual framework and outlines data collection techniques.

Chapter IV: Research Methodology

Chapter Purpose

This chapter describes the research methodology used to assess the type of knowledge acquired during the correctional officer pre-service training program with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). This chapter also discusses the operationalization of the conceptual framework.

Research Method

While most descriptive research aim to answer the questions “*what?*,” this study aims to answer “*what should?*” by using a practical ideal type research method (Shields and Rangarajan 2013). This study reviewed and evaluated the existing literature to determine what an ideal components of a modernized pre-service training for correctional officers. Then, the study utilized a case study methodology to compare the practical ideal type components against an actual agency that is providing pre-service training for correctional officers. A case study is the most appropriate research method because it allows the opportunity to review and analyze a specific agency that is facilitating a correctional officer pre-service training to see if they have incorporated the components of a modernized pre-service training for new correctional officers (Shields and Rangarajan 2013). This case study utilized a single method of analysis called document analysis. The unit of analysis used in this study are the materials and documents used in the correctional officer pre-service training program with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Due to the single method of analysis with this study, there is a limitation of validity.

Operationalizing the Conceptual Framework

The practical ideal type components and their corresponding elements were operationalized through the use of document analysis. Table 4.1 outlines the operationalization of the conceptual framework which is divided into three components (Shields and Rangarajan 2013). The operationalization table is divided into three columns. The first column outlines the elements in each practical ideal type component. The second column identifies documents used to gather information on the pre-service training program. The third column describes evidence used to determine whether the TDCJ pre-service training adheres to the ideal model.

Table 4.1 Operationalization Table

Title:	A Study of Modernized Personnel Training in Corrections: An Assessment of the Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training in Texas	
Purpose:	The purpose for this applied research project is threefold. First, it explores and describes the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assesses the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.	
Practical Ideal Type Components	Method of Data Collection	Evidence
1. Offender Management Training		
1.1 Observing offender movements/reading situations	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training and instruction on how to effectively observe offender movements and read situations to ensure safety with the inmate population.
1.2 Methods of basic counseling	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides knowledge on basic methods of counseling to equip correctional officers with the tools to handle inmate

		problems and conflicts.
1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) and case management skills	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides knowledge about RNR and case management strategies to equip correctional officers with the tools to assess and problem-solve the risks and needs of inmates.
1.4 Substance abuse awareness	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides knowledge about substance abuse to equip correctional officers with the awareness of substance abuse issues in a correctional setting.
1.5 Sexual abuse awareness (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates)	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides knowledge about sexual abuse that may be taking place in the correctional facility (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates) to equip correctional officers with the awareness of sexual abuse and to be in compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA).
1.6 Interacting with special inmate populations (specifically inmates with disabilities and/or mental health issues)	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides knowledge about special inmate populations and the issues they face in a correctional setting.
1.7 Recognizing manipulation (con games)	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training and instruction on how to recognize manipulation amongst inmates in a correctional setting.

2. Interpersonal Skills Training		
2.1 Identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training on the identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer (i.e. assertiveness, influencing, listening, communicating, de-escalating).
2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training and instruction on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff.
3. Prison Environment and Cultural Training		
3.1 Prison culture and correctional officer 'working personality'	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training and instruction about the prison culture and 'working personality' of correctional officers.
3.2 Prison environment and working conditions	Document Analysis Source: TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials*	The documents should reveal TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training provides training and instruction about the prison environment and working conditions within correctional facilities.

* TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training Materials include the following documents: training materials/handouts, course syllabus, etc. (See Table 4.2)

Document Analysis

Document analysis is the solitary collection tool used in this study. Training documents provide a written record of the material covered in the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. These documents provide base line data. While it is entirely possible that what is covered departs from the written record, it is unlikely that one of the components is covered when the written record shows it does not. For example, if the pre-service training materials do not have dedicated time or section on substance abuse awareness, there is strong evidence that component is missing.

Analyzing documents provided the opportunity to review and analyze the existing content that is covered during the correctional officer pre-service training with TDCJ. Advantages of a document analysis include the ability to review over information multiple times and to also have clear evidence to support the presence of a practical ideal type component in the pre-service training. If there is no clear evidence to support to the presence of a practical ideal type component, one could assume that that component is not present in the pre-service training program. Disadvantages involving document analysis include the time required to review and analyze the documents and a need for content familiarity. Other disadvantages include difficulties in procurement and bias selectivity if the collection of documents is incomplete and that document analysis cannot provide evidence about the quality of the training or the depth of presentation (Yin 2009, 2012).

Documents for this case study were collected from the Curriculum Supervisor with the TDCJ Correctional Institutions Division as well as from the TDCJ website between January and February of 2016. Table 4.2 outlines the documents reviewed in this study. The main document used in the study is the Pre-Service Training Course Outline which lists all of the content that is

currently covered in the TDCJ pre-service training and how many hours is spent on each topic. A copy of the Pre-Service Training Course Overview is provided in Appendix A of this study.

Table 4.2 Document List

TDCJ Pre-Service Training Document List	Lines up with Practical Ideal Type Components
Pre-Service Training Course Overview	1.1, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 3.1, 3.2
TDCJ New Employee Document Receipt	1.5
TDCJ Training and Staff Development (PD-97)	1.5
TDCJ General Rules of Conduct (PD-22)	1.5

Support Criteria

The collected evidence is gauged on a three-level scale of support: strong support, adequate support, and no support. The determination of all levels are subjective; however, the author’s knowledge on the subject matter curbs some of the subjectivity. A strong support level indicates that over two hours of the pre-service training supports the presence of the practical ideal type component and element in the reviewed documents. An adequate support level indicates that there was between thirty minutes and two hours of the pre-service training supporting the presence of the practical ideal type component and element in the reviewed documents. A no support level indicates that there was an absence of evidence (zero minutes of the pre-service training) to support the presence of the practical ideal type component or element in the reviewed documents.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology used in this study. A document analysis was used to gather evidence to assess the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. Advantages and disadvantages of using a document analysis were also discussed. The next chapter presents the results of the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training case study.

Chapter V: Results

Chapter Purpose

This research has three purposes. First, it explores and describes the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assesses the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This chapter summarizes the results collected from the case study.

The three practical ideal type components used to assess the data collected in the case study are: (1) offender management training; (2) interpersonal skills training; and (3) prison environment and cultural training. The results indicate evidence to support the presence of six out of the eleven elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. Of the Offender Management Training component, the following four elements indicate evidence of support: (1) observing offender movements and reading situations, (2) sexual abuse awareness, (3) special inmate populations, and (4) recognizing manipulation. Of the Prison Environment and Cultural Training component, the following two elements indicate evidence of support: (5) prison culture and correctional officer ‘working personality’ and (6) prison environment and working conditions. However, there is no evidence to support the presence of five out of the eleven elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. Of the Offender Management Training component, the following three elements indicate no evidence of support: (1) basic counseling, (2) risk-need-responsivity and case management, and (3) substance abuse

awareness. Of the Interpersonal Skills Training component, the following two elements indicate no evidence of support: (4) identification and definitions of interpersonal skills and (5) strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills. The TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training program could be improved if all of the components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program were present.

1. Offender Management Training

This study identified seven elements in the offender management training component. The seven elements in this category include: (1) observing offender movements/reading situations; (2) methods of basic counseling; (3) risk-need-responsivity (RNR) and case management skills; (4) substance abuse awareness; (5) sexual abuse awareness (between staff and inmates and/or inmates and inmates); (6) interacting with special inmate populations (specifically inmates with disabilities and/or mental health issues); and (7) recognizing manipulation (con games). All documents reviewed in this case study show evidence to support the presence of offender management training in the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training.

1.1 Observing Offender Movements and Reading Situations

Document Analysis

The first element in the offender management category is training on observing offender movements and reading situations. Upon review of the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline, there is limited evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided training on two main topics within the element of observing offender movements and reading situations. The first topic is on observing, assessing, and reporting behavior. The Pre-Service Training Course Overview states that trainees

spend an hour and a half learning ways to identify the differences between behavioral observation and judgement, changes to look for in offenders, and the type of emergencies staff may become involved in. The second topic is on understanding offenders. Trainees spend thirty minutes becoming familiar with the areas that offenders feel deprived, conditions that may trigger an offender's emotions, different offender roles in the correctional setting, and the "offender code." Due to the evidence provided from the documents, there are two hours of training time spend on this element. Therefore, this element is categorized at an adequate support level.

1.2 Basic Counseling

Document Analysis

The second element in the offender management category is training on basic counseling. Upon review of all the documents in this case study, there was no evidence to support the presence of basic counseling. This element is categorized at a no support level.

1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity and Case Management

Document Analysis

The third element in the offender management category is training on risk-need-responsivity. Upon review of all the documents in this case study, there was no evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. This element is categorized at a no support level.

1.4 Substance Abuse Awareness

Document Analysis

The fourth element in the offender management category is training on substance abuse awareness. Upon review of all the documents in this case study, there was no evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. This element is categorized at a no support level.

1.5 Sexual Abuse Awareness

Document Analysis

The fifth element in the offender management category is training on sexual abuse awareness. The TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline provided evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided with one and a half hours of training on sexual abuse, the safe prisons program, and the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). The training on PREA addresses offender-on-offender sexual abuse as well as staff-on-offender sexual abuse. This block of the training is designed to enhance the trainee's ability to recognize, effectively intervene, and prevent sexual abuse situations from occurring in the TDCJ correctional facilities.

Three other documents from the TDCJ pre-service training also provide evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type. The TDCJ New Employee Document Receipt reveals that new correctional officers are provided documents that cover the agency's policy on sexual harassment (with other staff and/or inmates). The TDCJ Training and Staff Development (PD-97) document provides evidence to support the training of the agency's prohibitions regarding relationships and sexual misconduct with inmates. The TDCJ General Rules of

Conduct (PD-22) document provides evidence to support the training on sexual misconduct with inmates. Due to this sufficient amount of evidence, this element is categorized at an adequate support level.

1.6 Special Inmate Populations

Document Analysis

The sixth element in the offender management category is training on special inmate populations. Upon review of the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline, there is strong evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided training on eight main topics within the element of special inmate populations. The first topic is a thirty-minute mental health introduction. The second topic is a one-hour overview of behavior management for inmates with varying types of mental illness. The third topic is one-hour time block of instruction designed to familiarize trainees with the characteristics of intellectual disabilities and inmates with a dual diagnosis. The fourth topic is a one-and-a-half-hour of training to define and differentiate between mood, personality, and psychotic disorders; this section of the training also provides trainees with tools to recognize symptoms associated with each disorder. The fifth topic is a one-and-a-half-hour session on the management of inmates with disabilities who are displaying aggressive behaviors. The sixth topic is a one-hour session on the role of correctional staff working with inmates with mental health diagnoses. The seventh topic is a thirty-minute session on working with inmates categorized in a special population due to a physical illness/disability, cognitive disability, or developmental disability. The eighth and final topic is on mental health first aid and suicide prevention; this session is offered twice throughout the pre-service training for a total of three hours of training on this topic. This element is categorized at a strong support level.

1.7 Recognizing Manipulation

Document Analysis

The seventh element in the offender management category is training on recognizing manipulation. Upon review of the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline, there is evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided training on two main topics within the element of recognizing manipulation. The first topic is a forty five-minute session on identifying offender extortion. During this session, trainees learn about prevention and investigation of extortion claims including staff detection methods. The second topic is on recognizing inmate con games. This two-and-a-half-hour session is designed to assist trainees in understanding the “art of manipulation” in the correctional environment. This element is categorized at a strong support level.

Summary of Findings (Category 1)

Document analysis in this case study identified evidence to support four of the seven elements in the offender management training category. Table 5.1 summarized the finding and the support levels for each of the elements in category one.

Table 5.1 Results for Category 1

Category 1: Offender Management Training		
Element	Finding	Support Level
1.1 Observing Offender Movements and Reading Situations	Evidence of training on the topic (2 hours on this topic)	Adequate Support
1.2 Basic Counseling	No evidence of training on the topic (zero time on this topic)	No Support
1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity and Case Management	No evidence of training on the topic (zero time on this topic)	No Support
1.4 Substance Abuse Awareness	No evidence of training on the topic (zero time on this topic)	No Support
1.5 Sexual Abuse Awareness	Evidence of training on the topic (1.5 hours on this topic)	Adequate Support
1.6 Special Inmate Populations	Evidence of training on the topic (10 hours on this topic)	Strong Support
1.7 Recognizing Manipulation	Evidence of training on the topic (3.25 hours on this topic)	Strong Support
Overall Rating		Mixed Support

2. Interpersonal Skills Training

This study identified two elements in the interpersonal skills training component. The two elements in this category include: (1) identification and definitions of interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer; and (2) strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff. None of the documents reviewed in this case study show evidence to support the presence of interpersonal skills training in the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training.

2.1 Identification and definitions of interpersonal skills

Document Analysis

The first element in the interpersonal skills training category is training on the identification and definition of interpersonal skills. Upon review of all the documents in this case

study, there was no evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. This element is categorized at a no support level.

2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills

Document Analysis

The second element in the interpersonal skills training category is training on strategies to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills. Upon review of all the documents in this case study, there was no evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. This element is categorized at a no support level.

Summary of Findings (Category 2)

Document analysis in this case study identified no evidence to support either of the elements in the interpersonal skills training category. Table 5.2 summarized the findings and the support levels for both of the elements in category two.

Table 5.2 Results for Category 2

Category 2: Interpersonal Skills Training		
Element	Finding	Support Level
2.1 Identification and definitions of interpersonal skills	No evidence of training on the topic (zero time on this topic)	No Support
2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills	No evidence of training on the topic (zero time on this topic)	No Support
Overall Rating		No Support

3. Prison Environment and Cultural Training

This study identified two elements in the prison environment and cultural training component. The two elements in this category include: (1) prison culture and correctional officer ‘working personality’; and (2) prison environment and working conditions. Some of the documents reviewed in this case study show evidence to support the presence of prison environment and cultural training in the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training.

3.1 Prison Culture and Correctional Officer ‘Working Personality’

Document Analysis

The first element in the prison environment and cultural training category is training on prison culture and correctional officer ‘working personality’. Upon review of the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline, there is evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided training on two main topics within the element of prison culture and correctional officer ‘working personality’. The first topic is thirty-minute session on the core values of being a correctional officer at TDCJ. These core values are taught to the trainees to shape the foundation that all correctional officers will perform their duties to conduct themselves as correctional professionals at TDCJ. The second topic is a one-hour session on peer acceptance with other correctional officers at TDCJ. This session provides information about the prison culture by discussing the importance of peer acceptance with other correctional officers as well as ways to address seasoned employees about policy or procedure concerns without being argumentative. This element is categorized at an adequate support level.

3.2 Prison Environment and Working Conditions

Document Analysis

The second element in the prison environment and cultural training category is training on prison environment and working conditions. Upon review of the TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline, there is evidence to support the presence of this practical ideal type element. The document reveals that correctional officers are provided training on two main topics within the element of prison environment and working conditions. The first topic is on the organizational structure of TDCJ. The second topic is a facility overview at the TDCJ pre-service training location. Both topics are covered in Block 1 of the Pre-Service Training; an hour is devoted to these two topics. This element is categorized at an adequate support level.

Summary of Findings (Category 3)

Document analysis in this case study identified evidence to support both of the elements in the prison environment and cultural training category. Table 5.3 summarizes the findings and support levels for both of the elements in category three.

Table 5.3 Results for Category 3

Category 3: Prison Environment and Cultural Training		
Element	Finding	Support Level
3.1 Prison Culture and Correctional Officer 'Working Personality'	Evidence of training on the topic (1.5 hours on this topic)	Adequate Support
3.2 Prison Environment and Working Conditions	Evidence of training on the topic (1 hour on this topic)	Adequate Support
Overall Rating		Adequate Support

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided the results of the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training case study. The study included document analysis as the solitary source of evidence. The overall results indicate a strong support level for two of the elements and an adequate level of support for four of the eleven elements analyzed in this case study. The results also revealed no level of support for five of the eleven elements analyzed in this case study. The following chapter provides some recommendations and conclusions based on these results.

Chapter VI: Recommendations and Conclusions

Chapter Purpose

This chapter provides recommendations and conclusions based on the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training case study. This research had three purposes. First, it explored and described the ideal components of a modernized correctional officer pre-service training program obtained from the literature. Second, it assessed the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice using the ideal components. Third, it provides recommendations for improving the correctional officer pre-service training program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This last chapter will wrap-up the final research purpose by providing recommendations based on the results of this case study.

Recommendations

A case study was used to examine the practical ideal type components of a modernized pre-service training for correctional officers. The results indicate evidence to support the presence of some components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. However, there is no evidence to support the presence of other components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. These elements include: (1) basic counseling, (2) risk-need-responsivity and case management, (3) substance abuse awareness, (4) identification and definitions of interpersonal skills, and (5) strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills. The TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training program could be improved if all of the components and elements of a modernized pre-

service training program were present. Table 6.1 summarizes the findings from the case study and provides recommendations.

Table 6.1 Findings and Recommendations

Case Study Summary for TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training		
Element	Evidence	Recommendations
Category 1: Offender Management Training		
1.1 Observing Offender Movements and Reading Situations	Adequate support	Continue to train new correctional officers about how to observe, assess, and report inmate behaviors and well as continuing to provide training on how to better understand offenders and their movements.
1.2 Basic Counseling	No support	Incorporate a section of the correctional officer pre-service training on learning the basic techniques of counseling inmates to prevent crises.
1.3 Risk-Need-Responsivity and Case Management	No support	Incorporate a section of the correctional officer pre-service training on learning the risk-need-responsivity model and how to provide basic case management to inmates.
1.4 Substance Abuse Awareness	No support	Incorporate a section of the correctional officer pre-service training on learning the warning signs of substance use, the techniques to properly handle and inmate who appears to be under the influence, and knowledge of proper documentation when reporting an incident of substance use by an inmate.
1.5 Sexual Abuse Awareness	Adequate support	Continue to train new correctional officers about sexual abuse, the safe prisons program, and laws regarding PREA.
1.6 Special Inmate Populations	Strong support	Continue to train new correctional officers about special inmate populations, intellectual disabilities, inmates with dual diagnoses, and mood/personality/psychotic disorders.
1.7 Recognizing Manipulation	Strong support	Continue to train new correctional officers about offender extortion and inmate con games.
Category 1: Overall Results		Mixed Support

Case Study Summary for TDCJ Correctional Officer Pre-Service Training		
Element	Evidence	Recommendations
Category 2: Interpersonal Skills Training		
2.1 Identification and definitions of interpersonal skills	No support	Incorporate a section of the correctional officer pre-service training on learning how to identify and define the interpersonal skills that are necessary in the role of the correctional officer.
2.2 Strategies on how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills	No support	Incorporate a section of the correctional officer pre-service training on learning strategies of how to effectively implement and exhibit interpersonal skills when interacting with inmates and other correctional staff.
Category 2: Overall Results		No Support
Element	Evidence	Recommendations
Category 3: Prison Environment and Cultural Training		
3.1 Prison Culture and Correctional Officer ‘Working Personality’	Adequate support	Continue to train new correctional officers about TDCJ’s core values and peer acceptance.
3.2 Prison Environment and Working Conditions	Adequate support	Continue to train new correctional officers about TDCJ’s organizational structure and providing them with a facility overview at the TDCJ location of their pre-service training.
Category 3: Overall Results		Adequate Support

Research Bias

The results of this case study should be reviewed with caution due to its limitations. The limitation of this case study is based on a single method of data collection: document analysis. Due to the single method of analysis with this study, there is a limitation of validity of the findings in this case study. There may have been additional ways of collecting data (interviews, survey, direct observation focus groups) that could have provided evidence resulting in different findings for this study. These data collection methods were not used due to limited access of

documents and time. The addition of interviews and/or direct observations may have altered the findings of this case study as well.

The document analysis, however, serves as a kind of floor. For example, if no evidence of basic counseling is found in the document reviewed, it is fairly safe to assume that interviews and focus groups would not yield such evidence. On the other hand, just because the prison culture is included in the documents, does not guarantee it is covered in practice. Hence, the negative findings of this study have more validity than the positive findings.

Conclusion

The results indicate evidence to support the presence of some components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. However, there is no evidence to support the presence of other components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program with the current TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training. The TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training program could be improved if all of the components and elements of a modernized pre-service training program were present.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides recommendations and conclusions based on the TDCJ correctional officer pre-service training case study. This chapter also provided information about possible biases.

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Appendix A:

TDCJ Pre-Service Training Course Outline (Excerpt)



Pre-Service Training Course Overview

CTSD operates six regional academies and oversees special unit-based pre-service classes across the state, in addition to maintaining a contract with Gary Job Corps, to provide core instruction to correctional candidates. Pre-Service trainees are required to attend a six week, 240-hour, on-site training program.

Requirements for completion of Pre-Service Training:

- Attend all hours of administrative in-processing and curriculum
- Score a minimum of 75% on three written exams
- Pass the pre-employment physical agility test with a minimum cumulative score of 75
- Qualify with firearms demonstrating at least 70% proficiency
- Complete chemical agents application and exposure
- Demonstrate competency in Offender Management/Mental Health practical exercises
- Pass the skills competency test in Offender Management Continuum techniques
- Pass the skills competency test in restraints and escort procedures

Designated non-uniformed correctional staff will attend the same Pre-service program as uniformed staff. To accomplish this, non-uniformed staff will attend all hours of curriculum and will be required to pass the written exams, and practical evaluations in restraint/escort procedures and defensive tactics; however, non-uniformed staff will not be required to pass the practical evaluations in physical agility, firearms, and chemical agents. Should a non-uniformed employee wish to graduate with a security certificate, the employee must participate in and pass all written and practical evaluations.

Beginning in January 2015, the division directors from Manufacturing and Logistics, Agriculture, and Facilities made the decision to require their employees to participate in firearms training with the intent to qualify during pre-service and every year thereafter during annual in-service. Each of these divisions are first responders any time there is an escape from custody, and the ability to carry a firearm during times of need is essential. These employees will not be required to participate in or pass the pre-employment physical agility testing or practical evaluation in chemical agent exposure in order to participate in firearms training.

Human Resources Headquarters will be responsible for scheduling new applicants for the Pre-Service training academy. Class dates and locations for this course are available on the agency training database, using course code PRES016. (Refer to the section titled, “Consolidated Training Database Overview”)

Pre-Service Training Course Overview

Minimum Standards for all Applicants

- Must be a citizen of the U.S. or an alien authorized to work in the U.S.
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Must possess a High School Diploma from an accredited senior high school or equivalent or a state-issued General Education Development (GED) certificate.
- Must not be on probation for any criminal offense
- Must not have pending charges for any criminal offense or have an outstanding warrant
- Convicted felons (or those convicted of an equivalent offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice) do not become eligible for consideration until 15 years have elapsed since termination of sentence
- Must not be on active duty in the military (persons on terminal leave from active duty may apply)
- Males, age 18 through 25, must be registered with the Selective Service if required to do so by Federal Law
- Must be able to perform the essential functions of the position applied for, with or without reasonable accommodation
- Must pass the TDCJ drug test

Additional Minimum Standards for Correctional Officer Applicants And Other Security Applicants

- Never have been convicted of a felony
- Not have been convicted of a Class A misdemeanor, or the equivalent, within the last 10 years
- Not have been convicted of a Class B misdemeanor, or the equivalent, within the last 5 years
- Never have been convicted of a drug-related offense
- Never have been convicted of an offense involving domestic violence
- Not have been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions
- Must pass the TDCJ pre-employment test
- Must pass the TDCJ pre-employment physical agility test

Pre-Service Training Course Outline

The Pre-Service Training Academy consists of 16 hours of administrative in-processing and 224 hours of curriculum.

Administrative In-Processing

Orientation and Direct Hire Session	6:00
In-Processing	4:00
Trainee Management/Testing Standards	2:00
General Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Action Guidelines for Employees	3:00
Trainee Counseling/Study/Test	1:00
TOTAL	16:00

Block 1

Agency Overview	2:00
• History of TDCJ	0:30
• Organizational Structure	0:30
• Facility Overview	0:30
• TDCJ Divisions and Offender Programs	0:30
Employee Professionalism	2:30
• Professionalism	0:30
• Ethics	0:30
• Core Values	1:00
• Peer Acceptance	
Offender Rights	2:00
• Significant Court Rulings Related to Offender Rights	0:30
• Access to Courts and Public Officials	1:00
• Offender Grievance Procedures	0:30
Safe Prisons	2:30
• Safe Prisons Program and PREA	0:30
• Offender Protection Investigations	0:45
• Offender Extortion	0:45
• Sexual Abuse	1:00
Constitutional Protections	3:30
• Offender Mail Procedures	0:45
• Offender Property	0:45
• Contraband and Searches	2:00

Pre-Service Training Course Outline

Mental Health		11:30
• Mental Health Introduction	0:30	
• Legal Responsibilities for Correctional Employees Regarding Mental Health Offenders	0:30	
• Confidentiality and Mental Health Offenders	0:30	
• Mental Health Evaluation and Diagnosis	1:00	
• Behavior Management	1:00	
• Observing, Assessing, and Reporting Behaviors	1:30	
• Intellectual Disability/Dual Diagnosis	1:00	
• Mood/Personality/Psychotic Disorders	1:30	
• Psychiatric Medications	1:00	
• Management of Aggressive Behaviors	1:30	
• Role of Correctional Staff Working with Mental Health Offenders	1:00	
• Operational Procedures of Inpatient Mental Health Care	0:30	
Communication		7:30
• Communication, Intervention Strategies, and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention	4:00	
• Con Games	2:30	
• Report Writing	1:00	
Understanding Offenders		4:30
• Offender Classification	0:30	
• Offender Standards of Behavior	0:30	
• Offender Disciplinary Procedures	1:00	
• Administrative Segregation	0:30	
• Special Populations	0:30	
• Security Threat Groups	0:30	
• Understanding Offenders	0:30	
• Female Offenders	0:30	
Security Concerns		4:30
• Security Concerns	1:00	
• Count Procedures	0:30	
• Escorts and Transports	1:00	
• Riots and Disturbances	0:30	
• Riot Control Formations	0:15	
• Escapes	0:30	
• Hostage Situations	0:45	

Pre-Service Training Course Outline

Incident Management	4:30
• Incident Command Systems	0:30
• Employee Survival and Use of Force	2:00
• Chemical Agents	1:30
• Restraint Tactics	0:30
• Therapeutic Restraints	0:15
Security Post Procedures, Perimeter Security, Weapons	5:45
• Security Post Procedures and Perimeter Security Systems	1:00
• Firearms	4:30
• Weapons Retention	0:15
Risk Management	1:15
• Risk Management and Emergency Procedures	0:45
• Worker's Compensation and Return to Work	0:30
First Aid/CPR	6:00
• Mental Health First Aid	1:00
• Suicide Prevention and Crisis Management	1:00
• Infection Control, First Aid, Medical Emergencies, CPR	4:00
Defensive Tactics	12:00
Trainee Counseling/Study/Test	2:00
	TOTAL 72:00

Block 2

Mental Health	3:00
• Mental Health First Aid/Suicide Prevention	2:00
• Constant and Direct Observation and Crisis Management	1:00
Security Concerns	3:00
• Riots and Disturbances	1:00
• Escapes	1:00
• Hostage Situations	1:00
Incident Management	6:00
• Incident Command Systems	1:00
• Employee Survival and Use of Force	2:00
• Chemical Agents	1:00
• Restraint Tactics	2:00

Pre-Service Training Course Outline

• Unit Tour – Contraband and Shakedown	4:00
• Unit Tour – Tour of Duty Posts	4:00
• Administrative Segregation Officer	3:00
• Cellblock Officer	3:00
• Cellblock Picket Officer	1:00
• Dorm Officer	2:00
• Dorm Picket Officer	0:30
• Shower Room Officer	0:30
• Recreation Officer	1:30
• Perimeter Security	2:00
• Public Medical Facility Transfer Officer	1:30
• Transfer Officer	1:00
• Corridor Control Officer	1:00
• Central Control Picket, Searcher’s Desk Officers	1:00
• Utility and Chain Officer	1:00
• Offender Visitation and Visitation Officers	2:00
• Food Service Officer	1:00
• Laundry, Education, Infirmary, Maintenance, Agriculture, Transportation, Safety, Supply	3:00
Chemical Agents Exposure/COP Application	2:00
Risk Management/Emergency Procedures	1:00
Defensive Tactics	12:00
Human Resource Topics and Employee Benefits	4:00
Firearms	5:00
Trainee Counseling/Study/Test	2:00
TOTAL	72:00

Block 3

Firearms/Perimeter Security Systems Practical Application	12:00
Chemical Agents Practical Application	2:00
Offender Management Continuum Practical Application	8:00
Restraints and Escort Procedures Practical Application	4:00
Offender Management Scenario Practical Application	38:00
Unit Tour of Duty	8:00
Mental Health Practical Application	2:00
FTO/OJT	2:00
Trainee Counseling/Out-Processing/Graduation	4:00
TOTAL	80:00

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Administrative In-Processing

During the first 16 hours of the PSTA, trainees will participate in the Administrative In-Processing session. Topics to be covered include:

Orientation/Direct Hire

Agency rules and regulations relating to pre-Service trainees as well as TDCJ and regional training academy/facility rules will be reviewed in this segment. During this lesson, trainees will fill out all new-hire paperwork and complete administrative in-processing.

In-Processing

During this time, participants will be issued uniforms, finger-printed, processed for identification cards, drug-tested, and assigned to dormitories as needed. The time allotted for in-processing is four hours. This is flexible and shall be utilized as necessary to facilitate necessary tasks (ex: drug testing may or may not occur during the first 16 hours, therefore necessary time to complete drug testing shall be allotted when necessary.)

General Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Action Guidelines for Employees

This segment serves as an introduction to basic policies and procedures and disciplinary guidelines as specified in PD-22, “*General Rules of Conduct and Disciplinary Action Guidelines for Employees.*” This segment establishes the employee's role in "the big picture," and emphasizes the importance of instilling professionalism, pride, and integrity in each employee.

Trainee Management

This segment was designed to provide new employees with the basic skills and knowledge necessary to become professional staff members. This lesson provides the participants with information concerning separation of employment, identification of academy rules, explains the assessment of demerits, and explains the disciplinary action process due to agency rule violations.

Block 1

Block 1 of the PSTA will form the foundation from which Blocks 2 and 3 will build upon. The focus of Block 1 of the PSTA will be on policy; helping the new correctional employee understand “why” we do things the way we do. This block will provide a basic overview of the TDCJ as well as an introduction and familiarization with relevant agency policy.

Block 1 – Agency Overview

During this block of instruction, participants will receive a general overview of the TDCJ. Topics to be covered include:

History of TDCJ

This lesson provides trainees with a brief history of the TDCJ from inception to present day.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Organizational Structure

This lesson will familiarize trainees with the mission, philosophy, and goals of the TDCJ, the role of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice, and provide them with an understanding of the organizational structure of the TDCJ.

Facility Overview

There are various types of TDCJ facilities to meet the diverse treatment needs and types of offenders housed. Each facility is unique in its own right, specifically designed to house different populations and to support various rehabilitative functions. During this lesson, trainees will take a brief look at the different types of units, as well as the different security levels and technology associated with each.

TDCJ Divisions and Offender Programs

This lesson provides trainees with an overview of agency work programs available to offenders on and off the unit. In addition, trainees will discuss how correctional officers/employees affect Offender Work Programs. As part of this segment, trainees are provided a brief overview of the various treatment and rehabilitation programs available to assist offenders in reintegrating into society, to include: Chaplaincy, Youthful Offenders Program, Sex Offender Treatment Program, Sex Offender Education Program, and the Windham School District educational programs. Employees are also introduced to the TDCJ substance abuse treatment system, which is the largest in the United States, and includes programs such as Treatment Alternatives to Incarceration Program, Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facilities, Intermediate Sanction Facilities, In Prison Therapeutic Communities, Pre-Release Therapeutic Communities, and Pre-Release Substance Abuse Programs.

Block 1 – Employee Professionalism

During this block of instruction, participants will receive an overview of what it takes to be a professional correctional employee. Topics to be covered include:

Professionalism

Professionalism is critical to the correctional environment. This lesson is designed to familiarize participants with the professional requirements of the position to include uniformed and non-uniformed standards for appearance and how appearance affects professionalism and the ability to carry out the mission of the TDCJ.

Ethics

The TDCJ Code of Ethical Conduct serves as the cornerstone for this segment. Participants will take an in-depth look at ethics in the workplace, and how the Code of Ethical Conduct should resonate in the performance of daily duties. Participants will also receive information regarding the TDCJ Advisory Council on Ethics.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Core Values

This segment serves as an introduction to the agency's core values: Integrity, Courage, Perseverance, and Commitment. These core values shape the foundation on which we perform our duties and conduct ourselves as correctional professionals. This segment is designed to provide pre-service participants with an understanding of what these core values are, and their importance to fulfilling the mission of the agency.

Peer Acceptance

Upon graduation from the Pre-Service Training Academy, participants will move on to Phase II, On-The-Job Training. This segment is designed to give participants a brief description of the OJT Program. During this time, participants will discuss the importance of peer acceptance as cadets transition from trainee to employee, as well as ways to address seasoned employees about policy or procedure concerns without being argumentative.

Block 1 – Offender Rights

This module is designed to provide participants with an overview of the legal aspects of corrections and rights of offenders as well as a brief overview of legal protections afforded to offenders. Topics to be covered include:

Significant Court Rulings Related to Offender Rights

Correctional officers must understand that failure to follow agency policy or state or federal laws may violate a constitutionally protected right of an offender and may expose the officer, the supervisor, and the agency to potential legal liability. This segment provides the correctional employees with knowledge of basic law and their responsibilities as related to this work environment. It also includes a discussion of the most common types of lawsuits filed by offenders as well as an explanation of basic constitutional rights to which offenders are entitled as outlined in the Bill of Rights.

Access to Courts and Public Officials

Every offender has the right of access to state and federal courts and to legal counsel and public officials and agencies. Every foreign national offender has the right to communicate with an official from the consulate of the offender's country. During this lesson, participants will discuss State Council for Offenders, the Ombudsman Program, Law Library privileges, and legal work/legal visits.

Offender Grievance Procedures

This segment addresses various grievable and non-grievable issues within the correctional environment and provides trainees with information regarding offender access to the grievance program, and the applicable procedures for utilizing the grievance system.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Block 1 – Safe Prisons

This module is designed to familiarize participants with TDCJ's zero tolerance stance on sexual abuse and assault within the correctional environment. Topics to be covered include:

Safe Prisons Program and PREA

During this segment, participants will view the Safe Prisons/PREA in Texas training video which covers the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), which addresses offender-on-offender sexual abuse and staff-on-offender sexual abuse and harassment, and how this law has shaped the TDCJ Safe Prisons/PREA Program. This video was designed to enhance the trainee's ability to effectively intervene and to help prevent offender sexual assault situations from occurring within the facilities. Trainees will learn how to identify potential victims and predators. This lesson also includes policy considerations as related to sexual assault in the correctional setting and describes the responsibilities and reporting required of involved staff.

Offender Protection Investigations

The TDCJ has **zero tolerance** for all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment of offenders. TDCJ employees are required to take a proactive approach concerning the detection, prevention, response, and punishment of sexual abuse, including consensual sexual contact while in TDCJ custody. This lesson provides participants with staff responsibilities when an offender requests protection, and discusses basic evidence handling procedures.

Offender Extortion

This lesson focuses on defining extortion. Trainees will learn about prevention and investigation of extortion claims to include: staff detection methods, and various methods of tracking extortion cases.

Sexual Abuse/Assault

This block of instruction is designed to enhance the trainee's ability to recognize and effectively intervene and prevent these sexual abuse/assault situations from occurring within our facilities. Trainees will discuss required response when informed about an offender sexual assault, and will receive in-depth information regarding proper evidence handling procedures.

Block 1 – Constitutional Protections

This module is designed to provide participants with a brief overview of legal protections afforded to offenders. Topics to be covered include:

Offender Mail Procedures

In this segment, trainees will be provided with an overview of information on the components of the TDCJ mail system and the four types of authorized correspondence. This lesson details the correctional employee's responsibility regarding proper mail handling.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Offender Property

TDCJ Administrative Directive, AD-03.72, “Offender Property,” addresses matters relating to acquisition, possession, storage and disposition of offender property. Proper handling and management of offender property is a critical part of the everyday duties of a correctional profession. During this lesson, participants will discuss authorized, unauthorized, and registered property, and will also discuss agency policy regarding offender-to-offender property transactions and requirements for proper storage of all property items.

Contraband and Searches

The elimination of contraband is directly related to the security and safety of a correctional facility. This block of instruction is designed to familiarize participants with the different types of contraband, and to point out ways that contraband can potentially jeopardize the safety and security of the prison facility.

Block 1 – Mental Health

This module is designed to give participants an in-depth look at mental health and crisis intervention training within the correctional environment. Topics to be covered include:

Mental Health Introduction

This information in this segment is taken directly from the Offender Orientation Handbook and will provide trainees with general information regarding available health, dental, and mental health care for offenders.

Legal Responsibilities for Correctional Employees Regarding Mental Health Offenders

Correctional staff have a duty to abide by policies and procedures. Employees must understand that failure to follow agency policy or state or federal laws may violate a constitutionally protected right of an offender and may expose the officer, the supervisor, and the Agency to potential legal liability. During this block of instruction, participants will discuss the importance of the Ruiz lawsuit as it relates to mental health programs for offenders, as well as other case law that has resulted in liability for correctional staff.

Confidentiality and Mental Health Offenders

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance when dealing with offender Protected Health Information. During this block of instruction, participants will learn what information is considered “Protected Health Information,” as well as who may request to review this information. Participants will also discuss the three types of confidential privilege associated with Protected Health Information.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Mental Health Evaluation and Diagnosis

All newly received offenders and all offenders returning from bench warrant after having been separated from the TDCJ for more than ninety (90) days will undergo an “Intake Mental Health Appraisal” by a qualified mental health professional (QMHP) within fourteen (14) days of admission to an intake facility. This block of instruction is designed to help participants understand the intake Mental Health Evaluation. Participants will also take a detailed look at the causes of mental illness, types of mental disorders, and will discuss how an offender is diagnosed with a mental illness.

Behavior Management

Behavior management is a way to change a person’s behavior. Our goal as correctional professionals is to promote positive change in offender behavior. During this block of instruction, participants will define behavior management, and discuss classifications of the Learning Theory. Participants will also receive instruction of types of psychotic or antisocial behavior, categories and severity of mental illnesses, procedures for entering the Chronic Mentally Ill Track, and will be equipped with the knowledge to identify malingering behavior.

Observing, Assessing & Reporting Behaviors

Correctional officers charged with managing mentally ill offenders will have continuous contact with offenders in special programs. In order to effectively manage these offenders, correctional officers assigned to designated Mental Health facilities must become part of the mental health treatment team to ensure each offender patient is properly referred to receive the highest level of care needed that will be the most beneficial to the offender patient. During this block of instruction, participants will identify the difference between behavioral observation and judgment, changes to look for in offender patients, types of emergencies staff may become involved in, and proper ways to report change in offender patient behavior.

Intellectual Disability/Dual Diagnosis

This block of instruction is designed to familiarize participants with the characteristics of Intellectual Disability. Participants will be provided with information regarding the levels of Intellectual Disability, as well as information regarding the Developmental Disabilities Program. During this block of instruction, participants will also identify the challenges of working with dual-diagnosed offenders.

Mood/Personality/Psychotic Disorders

Mood, personality and psychotic disorders encompass the majority of mental health disorders affecting our offender population. Therefore, it will be important to be able to distinguish between these categories of mental disorders. The goal of this lesson is to define these disorders and provide correctional staff with tools to recognize the symptoms associated with each.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Management of Aggressive Behavior

Correctional staff working with mentally ill offenders will be confronted with offenders with both temporary and long term illnesses and conditions. These employees may find themselves feeling uncertain when facing a crisis situation and may not know whether or not the situation will lead to aggressive behavior on the part of the offender. This block of instruction is designed to help correctional staff identify risk factors associated with violent behavior, as well as signs of potentially aggressive behavior. Participants will also discuss criteria for admission to various mental health programs for aggressive offenders.

Psychiatric Medications

Psychiatric medications are used to treat mental disorders. Without these medications, people suffering with mental health disorders may suffer serious and disabling symptoms. These symptoms can become even more dangerous within a correctional setting. During this block of instruction participants will identify the five classes of psychiatric medications, how these medications affect brain chemistry to produce desired results, describe the common side effects associated with psychiatric medications, and recall procedures for utilizing compelled psychoactive medication for offender management.

Operational Procedures of Inpatient Mental Health Care

The mission of the Psychiatric Inpatient Treatment Program (PIP) is to achieve stabilization and enable the offender patient to return to the general prison population as quickly as possible and in a manner which protects the dignity of the offender. During this block of instruction participants will list the three levels of inpatient care, distinguish between psychiatric and psychotherapeutic treatment methods, and will identify members of the Diagnostic and Evaluation Treatment Team.

The Role of Correctional Officers Assigned to Designated Mental Health Facilities

Correctional officers assigned to housing areas for offenders with mental health illnesses or disorders assume additional responsibilities related to the conditions of these offenders. These officers may be referred to as psych aides. During this block of instruction, participants will discuss the importance of not only maintaining security and control of the offenders, but also coordinating with the treatment team to ensure the offender is referred for appropriate care to ensure safety of the offender population.

Block 1 – Communication

This module is designed to provide participants with an overview of how communication affects the management of offenders. Topics to be covered include:

Offender Spanish and Slang

Participants will receive a handout with common Spanish terms/phrases utilized in the correctional facility as well as common slang terms and phrases utilized within the correctional environment. Spanish-speaking employees are encouraged to pursue qualification as an agency interpreter.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Communication, Intervention Strategies, and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention

Routine communication and interaction between staff and offenders is one of the most effective ways to build trust and encourage good behavior with the offender population. There will be times when correctional employees have to interact with offenders under adverse conditions, such as informing them of a policy change, declining a request or addressing acts of misconduct. Good communication skills and crisis intervention tactics will become especially important when managing mentally ill offenders, or offenders experiencing mental health distress. At any time, correctional personnel may find themselves in at-risk situations that have the potential for becoming violent. Preventative measures, such as recognition and intervention strategies, may allow for avoidance of physical confrontations and lessen the chance of personal injury. This lesson focuses on building effective communication skills and utilizing those skills to engage in active listening, giving directions and saying “no,” and defusing volatile situations.

Con Games

The Con Games section focuses on TDCJ prohibitions against establishing employee/offender relationships, reporting requirements, and disciplinary consequences for violating policy. The Manipulation of Correctional Employees by Offenders section is designed to assist in understanding the “art of manipulation” in the correctional environment. The Fraternization and Over-Familiarization section explains the five basic human needs that offenders may use to exploit a victim. This section discusses strategies offenders use to violate boundaries. Employees are provided with protective steps to take to prevent falling victim to con games.

Report Writing

Accurate and timely reports are an essential component of prison operations. This segment provides correctional employees with basic information on the importance of well-written reports, as well as tips for improving report writing skills.

Block 1 – Understanding Offenders

This module is designed to provide participants with an overview of all the components that come into play when managing offenders. Topics to be covered include:

Understanding Offenders

In this segment, trainees learn about the subculture of offenders. Trainees will become familiar with the areas in which offenders feel deprived, conditions that may trigger an offender’s emotions, different offender roles in the correctional setting, and the “offender code.”

Offender Classification

In this lesson, trainees are introduced to TDCJ intake procedures and provided with a brief overview of offender classification and how this relates to the management of offenders.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Offender Standards of Behavior

This informational content of this segment is taken directly from the Offender Orientation Handbook. Trainees will cover the rules that apply to the offender population, as knowing what offenders are and are not allowed to do is the most important component of offender management.

Offender Disciplinary Procedures

The disciplinary process is designed to modify offender behavior where necessary. Offenders in TDCJ are required to obey all rules and regulations either issued by TDCJ or those specific to their unit. If an offender violates a rule, he may be punished through the Disciplinary Process. During this segment, participants will discuss the differences between minor and major disciplinary cases, and will identify sanctions that may be imposed as a result of infractions.

Administrative Segregation

There are occasions within a correctional setting when it becomes necessary to administratively segregate offenders in order to preserve the safety and security of both offenders and staff. Administrative Segregation (Ad Seg) is governed by the TDCJ Administrative Segregation Plan. The purpose of the Administrative Segregation Plan is to provide uniform rules and regulations to guide staff in both the conditions and procedures relating to offenders housed in administrative segregation. During the segment, participants will discuss the categories of Administrative Segregation and how these levels affect property, commissary, recreation, and basic offender management.

Transient, Safekeeping, and Protective Safekeeping

This segment is intended to provide trainees with information regarding transient and safekeeping custody and offender management considerations for each.

Security Threat Groups

Offenders who participate in gang related activities may be confirmed as a security threat group member. This population represents a unique management challenge for correctional staff. During this lesson, participants will discuss the recognized STGs and cliques within TDCJ, the draw of becoming involved in gang activity, as well as housing and management guidelines for STG offenders.

Special Populations

Special needs offenders are a major area of concern within the correctional environment. Offenders with special needs include those with physical illness or limitations/disabilities, mental illness, developmental or cognitive disabilities, as well as those offenders in special populations such as Administrative Segregation and Security Threat Groups. Special needs also include gender, age and cultural differences. This segment provides an overview of each special population as well as guidelines for managing these offenders.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Female Offenders

This lesson is intended to address the gender-specific issues that affect daily operations within the unit/facility. This lesson will explore some of the realities presented in cross-gender supervision situations. In addition, trainees are educated on the importance of keeping staff-offender relationships strictly professional. During this block of instruction, participants will also discuss the prevalence of mental illness in the female offender population, behavioral characteristics exhibited by female offenders with mental illness, and manipulation tactics often employed by female offenders.

Block 1 – Security Concerns

This block of instruction is designed to provide participants with an overview of security considerations. Topics to be covered include:

Security Concerns

Correctional awareness and understanding the significance of basic security procedures is critical to the correctional profession. During this segment, trainees will discuss agency policies and procedures concerning tool and key control, procedures for maintaining control of security equipment, and the architectural concept of the inverted fortress set up of a prison facility and how this relates to managing offenders.

Count Procedures

The primary responsibility of TDCJ is to maintain custody and control of offenders. In order to carry out this responsibility, correctional employees must continually count the offender population. This lesson is designed to give employees a working knowledge of the five types of counts conducted on the units/facilities. This lesson introduces TDCJ SM-01.03 “*Count Procedures*,” which gives employees specific guidelines for conducting count.

Escorts and Transports

Escorts and transports are a routine part of day-to-day operations; therefore, it is essential correctional staff are familiar with policy and procedure requirements. During this block of instruction, participants will review types of escorts and required equipment associated with each. In addition, participants will discuss the many reasons an offender may travel from their unit of assignment to some other destination, restraint procedures for offender transports, and proper procedures and conduct for offender transports.

Riots and Disturbances

The main focus of this segment is to address those issues that may instigate a riot. In addition, trainees also learn about the various stages of a riot and procedures to quell disturbances and emergencies.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Riot Control Formations

This lesson identifies the different riot control formations utilized by TDCJ. The proper movements utilized in each formation will be discussed in greater detail during Block 2 of the PSTA.

Escapes

In this lesson, trainees are provided with an overview of escapes and provided with information on warning signs of an escape. Procedures to follow in the event of an offender escape will be discussed in greater detail during Block 2 of the PSTA.

Hostage Situations

Within this segment, trainees discuss the TDCJ's policy on hostage situations and are instructed on operational steps associated with a hostage situation, hostage survival techniques, and dealing with critical incident stress after a hostage event. First responder procedures will be discussed during Block 2 of the PSTA.

Block 1 – Incident Management

This module is designed to familiarize participants with proper procedures for managing incidents in the correctional environment. Topics to be covered include:

Incident Command Systems

The Incident Command System (ICS) is designed to facilitate an appropriate response to any type of emergency situation, and should be activated any time there is a need for additional resources. This lesson is designed to help participants understand how to activate the system and assume command in their capacity as line-level security or non-security personnel.

Employee Survival and Use of Force

This segment focuses on the employee's personal survival in the correctional environment. It discusses the general sense of awareness and the importance of being prepared physically and mentally to handle any situation that may arise, which are essential components in each employee's cognitive "self-defense survival kit." This segment is centered upon AD-03.48, Prevention of Employee Injuries Due to Offender Aggression, and the Use of Force Plan and how these policies allow for use of force in the event of physical altercations with offenders. The goal of this segment is to provide trainees with boundaries for what they are and are not allowed to do when faced with offender aggression in different situations (ex: unrestrained offender out of his cell, etc.)

Defensive Tactics

When force must be utilized, defensive tactics are preferred. This segment is designed to explain the theory behind defensive techniques, and information on the legal context of self-defense. Trainees will review natural body weapons during this segment.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Chemical Agents – Introduction, Chemical Agent Care, and Use of Protective Mask

At times, it may become necessary to utilize chemical agents against an aggressive offender. During this segment, trainees are introduced to the different types of authorized chemical agents as well as the physiological effects caused by the different chemical agents. Trainees will receive instruction in techniques for drawing COP chemical agents, and different spraying techniques, how to defend against an OC attack, and use and care of the protective mask. Practical application and exposure will be conducted during Blocks 2-3 of the PSTA.

Restraint Tactics

Mechanical restraints are necessary tools and extremely useful for the purposes of control and intervention. This lesson focuses on the responsibility of all correctional staff to ensure the safety and security of offenders in the custody of the TDCJ by using mechanical restraints correctly and as required by the situation. This lesson identifies the authorized types of restraints used by TDCJ, as well as the procedures to properly apply and utilize mechanical restraints within a correctional facility. In addition, this lesson includes a discussion of use of mechanical restraints for different custody levels escort procedures. Trainees will be required to demonstrate proper restraint application techniques during Block 3 of the PSTA.

Therapeutic Restraints

The Correctional Managed Health Care program uses therapeutic restraint only when medically indicated to prevent the confused, disoriented, or combative patient from injuring themselves or others. During this block of instruction, participants will learn about the different types of approved therapeutic restraints for mental health patients and will discuss the monitoring requirements for offenders in therapeutic restraints.

Block 1 – Security Post Procedures, Perimeter Security, Weapons

This module is designed to familiarize participants with security posts and duties and perimeter security. Participants will also be given their first opportunity to learn about weapons utilized within the correctional environment. Topics to be covered include:

Security Post Procedures and Perimeter Security Systems

This segment discusses the purpose of post orders, and identifies the basic responsibilities associated with various duty posts within the correctional facility, as well as responsibilities associated with being assigned as a as part of the perimeter security team. Specific post orders and procedures will be discussed in greater detail during Block 2 of the PSTA.

Firearm Safety

The redesigned PSTA allows participants the opportunity to work with firearms during each block. During Block 1, participants will discuss the use of firearms within the Use of Force continuum and will learn basic weapon familiarization. Safety is of the utmost concern when working with firearms. During each block of the PSTA, participants will discuss firearm safety and procedures to follow when handling red-handled and live weapons.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Revolver

This lesson addresses the safe and competent operation of the Smith and Wesson Model 64/65 revolver. The areas covered in this presentation include the basic nomenclature, and fundamentals of firing. Trainees will be afforded a second opportunity to work with each weapon during Block 2, to include handling and beam-hit practice. Skill competency will be completed during Block 3 of the PSTA.

Shotgun

This lesson addresses the safe and competent operation of the Remington Model 870P shotgun. During this module, participants will discuss basic nomenclature and fundamentals of firing. Trainees will be afforded a second opportunity to work with each weapon during Block 2, to include handling and beam-hit practice. Skill competency will be completed during Block 3 of the PSTA.

Rifle

This lesson addresses the safe and competent operation of the Colt AR-15 rifle. Areas covered in this presentation include basic nomenclature and fundamentals of firing. Trainees will be afforded a second opportunity to work with each weapon during Block 2, to include handling and beam-hit practice. Skill competency will be completed during Block 3 of the PSTA.

Weapons Retention

This lesson examines the strategies and techniques of weapons retention that will enhance officer survival and minimize tactical errors. Employees will learn about the importance of developing a “survival mindset,” and will identify four principles for developing and implementing a weapon retention system.

Block 1 – Risk Management

Risk Management and Emergency Procedures

This lesson introduces trainees to the TDCJ Risk Management program. This lesson includes information on prevention techniques and response procedures for major emergency issues relating to fires, smoke, explosions, bombs, and other hazardous conditions in the unit/facility. Employees will learn about TDCJ policy considerations as related to Risk Management and will be informed on proper reporting procedures. This lesson also includes a discussion of individual safety responsibilities, ADA accommodations within the unit/facility, and worker’s compensation.

Worker’s Compensation and Return to Work

If you are injured on the job, or are exposed to a communicable disease while on the job, the Workers’ Compensation Act entitles you to all health care needed to recover from your injury or illness. This lesson is designed to help participants understand what their responsibilities are if they are injured or become ill because of work-related incidences.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Block 1 – First Aid/CPR

Suicide Prevention and Crisis Management

This course highlights procedures for identifying and properly handling offenders who may indicate suicidal ideations. Within this lesson, correctional employees are familiarized with signs and symptoms which may be evident prior to an offender attempting suicide, and will discuss crisis intervention and response. This lesson utilizes the new 2015 TDCJ “Suicide Prevention and Response” training film to highlight policy considerations and procedures to be used in identifying and properly responding to suicide and suicide attempts. Participants will also discuss manipulative suicide attempts and mental health and suicide concerns as may pertain to other employees. Correctional officers assigned to designated Mental Health facilities should remember that they are working under different and unique circumstances than other correctional officers working with offenders in general population. They must mentally and physically prepare themselves for dealing with an offender in crisis. During this block of instruction participants will learn the steps involved in crisis intervention as well as effective communication and questions to ask during crisis management. Participants will also discuss elements that foster a supportive atmosphere when managing offenders in crisis.

Mental Health First Aid

The Mental Health First Aid lesson emphasizes the importance of professional behavior as it relates to managing mentally ill or suicidal offenders. The lesson provides participants with characteristics one may encounter in a mentally ill offender, how offenders may access mental health services, how employees may refer offenders for mental health care, and the various types of treatment available. Participants will view the new 2015 TDCJ “Mental Health First Aid” training film and discuss tips and the “ALGEE” method for managing offenders with mental health needs, whether they be mild or severe in nature.

Infection Control, First Aid, & “Family and Friends” CPR

This lesson class is divided into three modules: Infection Control, First Aid/Medical Emergencies, and CPR. The first segment of training, Infection Control, focuses on communicable diseases and techniques for preventing the spread of such diseases. The second segment, First Aid/Medical Emergencies, promotes and supports the agency directive regarding response to life-threatening emergencies, to include: difficulty breathing; chest pain; heavy bleeding; seizures; cool, pale, or clammy skin with decreased consciousness; red, hot or dry skin; offender appearing to be drunk; and altered mental status within the prison setting. This class will familiarize participants with procedures to follow when medical is available on the facility as well as when medical is unavailable to provide assistance. This segment also includes in-depth information regarding heat and cold related illnesses. During the third module, CPR, participants will be provided with a basic knowledge as to the concept of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Participants will be trained on hands-only CPR as approved by the American Heart Association through the “Family and Friends” Course.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Block 2

Block 2 of the PSTA will utilize the policy covered during Block 1 and will add in procedural information, to include Post Orders and other security procedures; and will help participants to understand “how” we accomplish the mission of the agency as well as required daily duties. During this segment, participants will participate in several decision-making exercises that will require them to call upon and utilize their knowledge of policy and procedure to handle real-life scenarios.

Block 2 – Mental Health

Mental Health First Aid and Suicide Prevention

The Mental Health and Suicide Prevention lesson emphasizes the importance of professional behavior as it relates to managing mentally ill or suicidal offenders. During this lesson, participants will discuss signs and symptoms suggestive of suicidal behavior; as well as ways to identify, intervene, and prevent offender suicide; and suicide attempts. This lesson builds upon the new 2015 TDCJ “Suicide Prevention and Response” training film and requires participants to discuss several “What if?” scenarios and other questions to ensure they are aware of proper procedures to be used in identifying and properly responding to suicide and suicide attempts. This lesson also focuses on the importance of effectively managing mentally ill offenders. Participants will build upon the knowledge from the new 2015 TDCJ “Mental Health First Aid” training film and discuss several “What if?” scenarios to ensure they are aware of proper procedures for managing offenders with mental health needs, whether they be mild or severe in nature.

Constant and Direct Observation and Crisis Management

Prevention of suicide is the responsibility of Health Services staff as well as security and other correctional personnel. This lesson is focused on the TDCJ guidelines for the referral and handling of offenders identified as suicide risks. If an offender is determined to be at risk for self-injury or suicide, he or she may be transferred to a crisis management facility. While awaiting transport, security may implement “Constant and Direct Observation” status. This training is designed to familiarize employees with security requirements for conducting constant and direct observation, as well as management practices for offenders in Crisis Management.

Block 2 – Security Concerns

Riots and Disturbances

This block of instruction will provide participants with an opportunity to review the circumstances surrounding the Smith Unit riot, and discuss security breakdowns that lead to this unfortunate event. Participants will discuss steps to take during this type of incident and how to prevent escalation of riots/disturbances through use of CAPER.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Escapes

During this lesson, participants will review policy and procedural information regarding escapes. This information will be utilized to facilitate a discussion regarding employee responsibilities should they witness or find items that indicate and escape or impending plan of escape, as well as procedures to follow in the event of a building or field escape. Participants will also examine the escape that resulted in the homicide of Correctional Officer Susan Canfield and the escape of Arcade Comeaux. Participants will take an in-depth look at the security procedure breakdowns that contributed to these escapes and will discuss measures to take to prevent an escape from happening while they are on duty.

Hostage Situations

Within this segment, trainees will review the TDCJ's policy on hostage situations, first responder duties, and the “do’s” and “do not’s” of being a hostage. Participants will also discuss the importance of debriefing following a critical incident. As part of this segment, participants will review two TDCJ hostage situations and will discuss security procedure breakdowns that led to each, as well as what should have been done differently or what the participants would have done in a similar situation.

Block 2 – Incident Management

This segment will build on policy discussed in Block 1 and will allow participants the opportunity to engage in a discussion of historical incidents of the TDCJ as well as several “What if?” scenarios, designed to help participants begin thinking about what they would and should do in the event of an incident.

Incident Command Systems

As discussed during Block 1, ICS must be initiated anytime staff find themselves in a situation that is out of the norm or requires additional resources. In the following segment, trainees will examine scenarios and determine the appropriate level of response. Trainees will participate in a skills assessment in which they will be required to properly identify and explain the steps necessary to activate ICS and manage an incident. Trainees will also discuss proper radio procedures for initiating ICS during a suicide/attempted suicide scenario.

Employee Survival and Use of Force

It is each employee's responsibility to thoroughly review and become knowledgeable of procedures, reporting, and proper documentation of uses of force in accordance with the agency's Use of Force Plan. This instructional lesson is designed to supplement the employee's knowledge of the agency's Use of Force Plan. Participants will discuss scenarios (disruptive offender that will not comply with orders, restrained but combative offender, offender spitting or chunking, staff assault, and offender with a weapon and will be required to identify the proper steps to take to manage each scenario. Participants will also review actual use of force video scenarios and engage in a discussion regarding the level of force used and why staff action was justified for each incident. As part of this lesson, participants will also discuss using defusing techniques and other intervention strategies to prevent dangerous scenarios that may involve offenders experiencing mental health issues and/or distress from escalating to the point of physical violence.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Chemical Agents

During this block of instruction participants will review chemical agent information discussed during Block 1. Block 2 will build upon this information and will better prepare participants to understand when COP is authorized, defensive techniques to use against an aerosol attack, canister drawing techniques, as well as procedures and considerations for utilizing and deploying other munitions. Participants will discuss several scenarios and must be able to properly identify required staff actions to respond and manage each incident.

Restraint Tactics

Block 2 will build upon basic restraint information discussed during Block 1 of the PSTA. During this segment, participants will identify situations when the use of mechanical restraints is authorized, proper application of restraints in use of force situations, as well as for escorts and offender transports. Participants will be provided with step-by-step instruction for applying each of the authorized types of restraints. These instructions will be supplemented with videos demonstrating proper application. Additionally, participants will discuss several “What if?” scenarios and how restraints would be utilized in the management of each.

Block 2 – Risk Management/Emergency Procedures

Risk Management/Emergency Procedures

Participants will begin with a review of basic emergency procedures discussed during Block 1 of the PSTA. Trainees will be required to identify classes of fires and select proper suppression equipment and demonstrate proper steps to take during a fire/smoke/explosion scenario. Additionally, participants will receive additional safety training and will be required to complete an AD-84 Inspection, and a Chemical Issuance log.

Block 2 – Chemical Agent Application/Exposure

Chemical Agents Application/Exposure

Correctional uniformed employees will be exposed to Orthochlorbenzalmalononitrile (CS) without a protective mask. Correctional uniformed employees will be required to demonstrate proficiency in drawing and administering Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) COP. Following successful completion of the practical demonstration, correctional uniformed employees will be qualified as chemical agent applicators. Non-uniformed employees will be encouraged to participate in the chemical agent practical demonstration; however, participation will not be required.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Block 2 – Weapons

Firearms

The redesigned PSTA allows participants the opportunity to work with firearms during each block. During each block of the PSTA, participants will discuss firearm safety and procedures to follow when handling red-handled and live weapons. During Block 2, participants will work with red-handled firearms to practice for firing line exercises. Participants will be required to demonstrate competency in loading, unloading, and following range commands utilizing the red-handled weapons.

Block 2 – Sexual Abuse/Assault

Sexual Abuse/Assault

This block of instruction is designed to enhance the trainee's ability to recognize and effectively intervene and prevent these sexual abuse/assault situations from occurring within our facilities. Trainees will review required response when informed about an offender sexual assault, and will discuss several "What if" scenarios and will be required to accurately identify procedures to follow for each.

Block 2 – Human Resource Topics/Employee Benefits

Human Resource Topics and Employee Benefits

The following Human Resources lesson plan will be discussed when Human Resource staff returns to process 30-day insurance changes. This section has been designed to mirror Human Resource and Employee Benefit training delivered to non-security employees in Direct-Hire sessions. This segment will identify the functions overseen by the agency's Human Resources Department. Topics discussed during this presentation include: the grievance process, performance evaluations, Employee Assistance Program, Texas Legal Protection Plan, the selection process for vacant positions, Homes for Texas Heroes Program, and the agency's drug-free policy. In addition, this lesson serves as an introduction to employee benefits offered by the TDCJ. Topics discussed during this presentation include: employee time reporting, work cycles, types of and policies related to employee leave, salary schedules, direct deposit program, insurance coverage, employee retirement and eligibility criteria, and the Texa\$aver program.

Block 2 – Offender/Institutional Management

This segment will utilize post orders to breakdown basic job duties of a correctional professional, and will help participants to understand how all topics covered during the PSTA come together in the day-to-day operations of a correctional facility. Within each segment, trainees will cover (as applicable to each) the duties and responsibilities of each position, security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision and standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort and transport considerations. Specific topics to be covered include:

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Administrative Segregation Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Administrative Segregation officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Administrative Segregation housing area/offender population. Trainees will discuss in-cell medication administration and psychiatric medication considerations. Trainees will also discuss the importance of paying attention during security rounds not only to prevent suicides from occurring, but also so they can accurately observe, assess, and report behaviors regarding the physical and mental health of offenders in the housing area. As part of this discussion, trainees will review the ALGEE approach for handling Administrative Segregation offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress and will review best practices for getting proper assistance for these offenders. During this lesson, trainees will also review communication and how non-violent crisis intervention strategies can be used to de-escalate a potentially dangerous situation involving an offender experiencing mental health issues/distress. Trainees will also discuss the cell inspection and Administrative Segregation escort procedures competency tasks

Cellblock Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Cellblock officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the duty position. Trainees will discuss the importance of paying attention during security rounds so they can accurately observe, assess, and report behaviors regarding the physical and mental health of offenders in the housing area. Trainees will be advised to pay attention to offenders who may be acting abnormally as a result of poor psychiatric medication compliance. As part of this discussion, trainees will review the ALGEE approach for handling offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress and will review best practices for getting proper assistance for these offenders. Trainees will discuss behavior management techniques that may be used on offenders whether they are experiencing mental health issues/distress or not, that will assist in ensuring offenders abide by standards of conduct and provide an informal resolution techniques to employ prior to initiating disciplinary cases. During this lesson, trainees will also review communication and how non-violent crisis intervention strategies can be used to de-escalate a potentially dangerous situation involving an offender experiencing mental health issues/distress. Trainees will also discuss the step-by-step procedures for the ingress/egress, cellblock/dormitory count procedures, distribution of offender mail, and completion of the I-210 disciplinary form competency tasks.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Cellblock Picket Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Cellblock Picket officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the role of the Cellblock Picket officer. Trainees will discuss the importance of monitoring the behavior of offenders in the dayroom and in the cellblock paying close attention to those offenders who may be experiencing mental health issues/distress. Trainees will also be advised on the importance of paying close attention to the cellblock officer and being ready to react and get assistance if the cellblock officer indicates an offender is in mental health distress or attempting suicide. Trainees will also discuss the cell inspection and Administrative Segregation escort procedures competency tasks

Dorm Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Dorm officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Administrative Segregation housing area/offender population. Trainees will discuss the importance of paying attention during security rounds not only in the prevention of suicide, but also so they can accurately observe, assess, and report behaviors regarding the physical and mental health of offenders in the housing area. Trainees will be advised to pay attention to offenders who may be acting abnormally as a result of poor psychiatric medication compliance. As part of this discussion, trainees will review the ALGEE approach for handling offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress and will review best practices for getting proper assistance for these offenders. Trainees will discuss behavior management techniques that may be used on offenders whether they are experiencing mental health issues/distress or not, that will assist in ensuring offenders abide by standards of conduct and provide an informal resolution techniques to employ prior to initiating disciplinary cases. During this lesson, trainees will also review communication and how non-violent crisis intervention strategies can be used to de-escalate a potentially dangerous situation involving an offender experiencing mental health issues/distress. Trainees will also discuss the cell inspection and Administrative Segregation escort procedures competency tasks

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Dorm Picket Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Dorm Picket officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Dorm Picket officer duty post. Trainees will discuss the importance of monitoring the behavior of offenders in the dayroom and in the cellblock paying close attention to those offenders who may be experiencing mental health issues/distress. Trainees will also be advised on the importance of paying close attention to the cellblock officer and being ready to react and get assistance if the cellblock officer indicates an offender is in mental health distress or attempting suicide.

Shower Room Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Shower Room officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Shower Room officer. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior at all times, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors. Trainees will also discuss step-by-step procedures for the management of offender showers competency task during this block of instruction.

Recreation Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Recreation officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Recreation officer duty post. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior at all times, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors. Trainees will also discuss the step-by-step procedures for pat search and strip search competency tasks.

Perimeter Security

The integrity of an institution's perimeter security system is maintained by correctional staff assigned to various perimeter security duty posts. This course is designed to familiarize employees with the duties and responsibilities of perimeter security, as well as the safe and effective use of firearms at a correctional facility. Participants will also discuss firearms safety and develop a clear understanding of weapons-related duty performance expectations.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Public Medical Facility Transfer Officer

The objective of this lesson is to identify policy, procedure, and specific protocol regarding the safe and effective escort of offenders during transports to public medical facilities. This course will identify the best practices regarding escorting and managing offenders in a public medical facility. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, offender supervision, standards of behavior, and escort procedures as applicable to the Public Medical Facility Transfer officer duty post. Trainees will also discuss the step-by-step procedures for searching handicapped offenders, proper restraint application, and search of a transfer vehicle.

Transfer Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Transfer officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, and escort procedures as applicable to the Transfer officer duty post. During this segment, trainees will discuss safe and effective management of offenders who may be experiencing mental health issues/distress who require off-unit transfer.

Corridor Control Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Corridor Control officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, and Safe Prisons/PREA considerations as applicable to the Corridor Control officer duty post. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior in the hallway, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors.

Central Control Picket, Searcher's Desk Officers

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Central Control Picket and Searcher's Desk officers. Participants will review the post orders for these positions and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Central Control Picket and Searcher's Desk duty posts.

Utility and Chain Officers

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Utility and Chain officers. Participants will review the post orders for these positions and discuss security concerns, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, and escort procedures as applicable to the Utility and Chain officer duty posts. Trainees will also discuss step-by-step procedures for the managing offender property competency task.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Offender Visitation and Visitation Officer

Visitation is a vital part of an offender's rehabilitation. As such, the TDCJ encourages offender visitation within security and classification guidelines. This lesson is designed to familiarize trainees with Offender Visitation procedures, and to provide trainees with an understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Visitation Officer. Participants will view the agency Offender Visitation training video, and will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, as applicable to Offender Visitation and the Offender Visitation officer duty post. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior at all times, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Offenders may receive bad news during a visit, or may get into an argument with a loved one, etc. The visitation officer must pay close attention visits in progress as well as how offenders behave as they leave visitation. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors.

Food Service Officer

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the Food Service officer. Participants will review the post order for this position and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to the Food Service officer duty post. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior at all times, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors. Trainees will also discuss step-by-step procedures for the management of offender dining hall competency task.

Laundry, Education, Infirmary, Maintenance, Agriculture, Transportation, Safety, Supply

During this lesson, trainees will take an in-depth look at the duties and responsibilities of the various other correctional positions, in order to gain a well-rounded understanding of TDCJ and unit operations. Participants will review the post orders/job descriptions for these positions and discuss security concerns, count procedures, contraband control, search procedures, security inspections, offender supervision, standards of behavior, mental health and suicide considerations, Safe Prisons/PREA considerations, disciplinary, and escort procedures as applicable to these positions. Trainees will discuss the importance of being vigilant and paying attention to offender behavior at all times, as offenders experiencing mental health issues/distress may not be confined to their cell at the time they break down. Trainees will discuss communication and non-violent crisis intervention as well as observing, assessing, and reporting abnormal behaviors.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Unit Tour – Tour of Duty Posts

This segment is designed to complement the virtual tour and post order training received during Blocks 1-2 of the PSTA. After completion of post order training, trainees will be escorted to a nearby facility for a four-hour tour of duty posts in order to associate post order knowledge with a visual understanding of the actual duty post. This tour shall include a tour of medical and/or mental health. This segment will be conducted during the morning on the same day as the Contraband and Shakedown unit tour.

Unit Tour – Contraband and Shakedown

This segment is designed to enhance our ability as correctional professionals to effectively manage contraband within institutions. As part of this lesson, employees will learn about unit search procedures. Participants will be given instruction on how to conduct a proper pat search of employees, visitors, and offenders in accordance with recently update policy, as well as proper procedures for conducting a strip search and body cavity search of an offender. Participants are provided with instruction on how to detect, identify, confiscate, report, and dispose of contraband. Trainees will review the different types of searches and shakedowns and the advantages and disadvantages of each. During this lesson, participants are escorted to a nearby unit for a four-hour block where they shall demonstrate practical application of skills by conducting offender searches and a thorough area shakedown (with staff assistance.)

Block 3 – Practical Application Testing

Firearms Safety

Safety is paramount when utilizing firearms. During this lesson, TDCJ range and unit safety rules will be thoroughly addressed.

Rifle Practical

Uniformed trainees will be required to demonstrate individual skill competency in firing the AR-15. A score of at least 70% is required to qualify. Non-uniformed personnel may participate in this segment and are encouraged to qualify; however, they will not be held to a skill competency requirement.

Shotgun Practical

Uniformed trainees will be required to demonstrate individual skill competency in aiming and firing the shotgun. Non-uniformed personnel may participate in the practical exercise and are encouraged to qualify; however, they will not be held to a skill competency requirement.

Revolver Practical

Uniformed trainees will be required to demonstrate individual skill competency in firing the revolver. A score of at least 70% is required to qualify. Non-uniformed personnel may participate and are encouraged to qualify; however, they will not be held to a skill competency requirement.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Perimeter Systems

Uniformed trainees will be required to demonstrate individual skill competency in relieving and relinquishing a perimeter picket as well as a perimeter mobile patrol. The relieving exercise will require a trainee to inspect, unload, clear, reload weapons assigned to pickets. The trainee will also account for all equipment. The relinquishing exercise will require a trainee to provide security while the relieving officer inspects, unloads, clears, and reloads weapons assigned to pickets. The trainee will also be required to relinquish all accounted for all equipment.

Chemical Agents Practical Application

Participants will demonstrate proper procedures to load, fire, and unload one cartridge from the 37mm or 40mm gas gun while correctly wearing a protective mask. Participants will demonstrate proper procedures for handling and deploying a grenade while correctly wearing a protective gas mask. Participants will also demonstrate drawing techniques utilized in the application of COP chemical agents.

Restraints and Escort Procedures Practical Application

Trainees will be required to demonstrate proper restraint application techniques and escort procedures based on policy and procedures discussed during Blocks 1-2 of the PSTA.

Offender Management Scenario Practical Application

During this segment, trainees will be required to utilize policy and procedural information from Blocks 1-2 of the PSTA to demonstrate competency in managing scenarios based on probable events correctional employees will encounter such as: an attempted suicide in progress, offender refusing to obey direct orders, offenders with contraband, offenders fighting, offender refusing to exit chow hall, escorting an offender from Administrative Segregation, etc. During this block, participants will also spend time at a unit conducting job tasks such as counts, ingress and egress, assisting in recreation/chow, conducting searches, etc.

Unit Tour of Duty

As part of Pre-Service training, employees will complete a “Unit Tour of Duty,” consisting of eight hours of job-shadowing at a correctional facility. This lesson provides trainees with a familiarization of unit operations and prepares them for a structured, supervised, initial exposure experience. It is designed to familiarize the trainee with the reality of working in a correctional setting. As part of this segment, trainees will be required to complete competency tasks listed in the *TDCJ CTSD On-The-Job Training Program Procedures Manual* as applicable to their job classification/duty post assignment for the day. These task will be recoded on a Tour of Duty Task card and will be returned to the instructor at the end of the tour.

Mental Health Practical Application

During this segment, trainees will be required to demonstrate competency in recognizing the signs and symptoms of mental health issues and mental health distress and responding to provide the offender with proper assistance based on his/her actions.

Pre-Service Training Course Descriptions

Offender Management Continuum

This exercise will comprise of three separate scenarios in which a trainee will be required to demonstrate a continuum of offender management. An instructor wearing protective equipment will act as an offender who will require all elements of the offender management continuum. Starting with Communications skills, escalating to defusing skills, continuing to using the use of force continuum, moving to use of COP, ultimately using defensive tactics, and finishing with restraint tactics. The exercises are designed to build confidence in the trainee and to demonstrate the need for all elements in possible violent situation.

FTO/OJT

During this block of instruction instructors will prepare participants for transition from the Pre-Service Training Academy to the OJT program at the facility.