



Judicial Council of California · Administrative Office of the Courts

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

For business meeting on April 29, 2011

Title	Agenda Item Type
Judicial Branch Education: Partnerships	Information Only
Submitted by	Date of Report
Administrative Office of the Courts	March 22, 2011
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Executive Summary

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has participated as a partner in the development of several successful degree- or certificate-bearing educational programs for current and prospective court employees. These education partnerships relate to the Judicial Council's Strategic Plan for 2006–2012, Goal III, Section A(3): “Attract, employ, and retain a judicial branch workforce that is highly qualified,” and Goal V, Sections 3 and 4: “Create and maintain education-based partnerships between judicial branch entities and institute of higher learning, nonprofits and other professional organizations to maximize shared use of educational resources and to ensure branchwide access to comprehensive, relevant academic content” and “Increase access for judicial branch personnel to continuing education opportunities; enhance local courts’ educational resources and environments.” Similarly, the Operational Plan (2008–2011) states in Goal V: Education for Branchwide Professional Excellence, Objective 1b: “Collaboration and partnerships with institutions of higher learning, and with justice system partners, to leverage educational resources.” In this report, four education partnerships will be highlighted. The AOC has provided subject-matter expertise, faculty, curricula, and funding toward the development of an associate of arts (AA) degree in judicial administration and certificates of achievement at San Jose City College; a graduate certificate in judicial administration at California State University, Sacramento; an executive master of public administration with a concentration in judicial

administration at Golden Gate University and certification in court management and court executive programs at the Institute for Court Management of the National Center for State Courts.

Previous Council Action

In 2003, the Governing Committee of the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) directed the Education Division/CJER to investigate the potential for partnerships with institutions of higher learning in the area of judicial administration. The goal for this request was to increase the ability for judicial branch personnel to have access to relevant education that could lead to the completion of degrees and certificate programs in the area of judicial administration. Professional development of staff is critical during this time when many mid- and senior-level managers are nearing retirement. Succession planning is essential to be able to adequately replace those departing staff. Creating viable partnerships with institutions of higher education benefits the court system, as well as the individual staff who achieve a degree or other credential.

Methodology and Process

The chancellor's offices for the California Community Colleges and California State University were contacted by the Education Division/CJER, which held discussions on the mutual benefit of partnering with these institutions and the courts to develop current employees and to access the pool of potential employees who might select the courts as a career path. Over the subsequent few years, California State University, Sacramento; Golden Gate University; and San Jose City College became partners with the AOC in the development of programs that were focused on judicial administration. Additionally, in 2008 the AOC partnered with the Institute for Court Management and six other states to provide expertise in the modification of current courses, development of new courses, and selection and training of California faculty for the certificate programs.

Implementation Efforts

The education partnerships have resulted in several very successful programs, including an associate of arts degree, a master's degree, and graduate certificates in judicial administration.

- In 2008, San Jose City College (SJCC) applied for and received certification for a new AA degree program and five certificate programs in judicial administration from the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The AA degree program integrates court-specific coursework with general education requirements. This program is appropriate for court employees who are focused on career promotional opportunities and students who are exploring court career options.

Both the SJCC degree and the certificate programs are now offered partially online and will be fully online in fall 2011. Through a distance-education strategic delivery system, the programs will now provide education and development opportunities to all court employees throughout the state. Retired and current court executive officers serve as faculty in the SJCC

Administration of Justice program, as do some AOC managers. These experienced faculty members will continue to enhance the curriculum development as the academic program matures.

- The California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) Judicial Administration Graduate Certificate at the College of Continuing Education provides students with an opportunity to learn from current court leaders in the California judicial system. This program was developed in close partnership between the university and the AOC. The four-course graduate certificate in judicial administration is designed for highly motivated individuals currently working in the courts and for those interested in potential careers in court administration. This program greatly enhances certificate holders' skills, enabling them to work with judges and stakeholders and secure higher levels of responsibility within the court system. To date, this program has produced graduates who have gone on to become court executive officers and court managers. CSUS Judicial Administration graduates have come from counties throughout California and represent a cross-section of court leaders, including representatives from management, information services, human resources, and finance. The program will be expanding to the southern region in fall 2011.
- The Golden Gate University (GGU) Executive Master of Public Administration with a judicial administration concentration is for students interested in a thorough understanding of the processes and practices associated with the management of public sector organizations with a focus on judicial administration. It provides in-depth exposure to the critical areas of executive and managerial skills common to middle and upper-level management in all public organizations. Included in the curricula are planning; process management; financial management; human resources and labor relations; organizational development and change; law and administrative process; public policy formulation, analysis, and implementation; and ethics. The Education Division/CJER, in collaboration with GGU, was instrumental in the development of the judicial administration curriculum for this degree. Current graduates of the program come from the superior courts and the AOC. This degree can be earned online and is therefore available to all potential graduate students in the state interested in advancing their education, skills, and knowledge.
- In 2008, the AOC entered into a partnership with the Institute for Court Management (ICM) to provide funding and subject-matter and design expertise in the development of new and revised curricula for ICM's certificate programs. During the past three years, more than 400 court and AOC participants have taken one or more courses and 36 court leaders have received Certified Court Manager certification. In addition, many students are continuing to take ICM courses to earn their Certified Court Executive certification and ultimately to complete the requirements to become an ICM Fellow. Faculty becomes certified to teach these courses by attending an ICM train-the-trainer program and faculty development offered by the Education Division/CJER. By participating in this partnership with ICM and six other states, California is able to offer this education and the credits toward certification to branch employees at a reduced rate of \$50 per class. The cost for these courses when taken outside the partnership is \$845 per course. Classes are held in the regional offices and in local courts, and faculty come from the courts and the AOC.

Each of the first eight ICM courses has been approved for two graduate credits from California State University, San Bernardino. The last four courses will likely be approved in the near future.

Next Steps

The AOC continues to work with the existing programs and potential additional institutions to expand the opportunities for academic credit for court employees throughout the state. Using proceeds from a State Justice Institute grant, the AOC continues to assist California State University, Sacramento, in its efforts to offer the Judicial Administration Graduate Certificate program in Southern California and to develop parts of the program to be offered online. The AOC is also working with additional community colleges to help them access the successful program offered at SJCC.

ICM courses will continue to be a significant source of development for court managers and supervisors in the courts, and the Education Division/CJER will continue to provide faculty, faculty development, and coordination necessary to offer these courses in the regional offices and locally as requested.

Relevant Strategic Plan Goals and Operational Plan Objectives

These activities fall within the framework of the Judicial Council's Strategic Plan (2006-2012), including:

- Goal III (Section A(3)): Attract, employ and retain a judicial branch workforce that is highly qualified.
- Goal V (Section 3): Create and maintain education-based partnerships between judicial branch entities and institutes of higher learning, nonprofits, and other professional organizations to maximize shared use of educational resources and to ensure branchwide access to comprehensive, relevant academic content.
- Goal V (Section 4): Increase access for judicial branch personnel to continuing education opportunities; enhance local courts' educational resources and environments.

Additionally, within the Judicial Council's Operational Plan (2008-2011), education partnerships are noted under the goal of "Education for Branchwide Professional Excellence:"

- Goal V (Objective 1(b)): Provide relevant and accessible education and professional development opportunities for all judicial officers (including court-appointed temporary judges) and court staff.
 - Collaborations and partnerships with institutions of higher learning, and with justice system partners, to leverage educational resources.