

Franklin University

FUSE (Franklin University Scholarly Exchange)

Scholars Showcase 2018: Innovations in Leadership and Learning

10-5-2018

Can We Train Cops Virtually? Evaluating the Feasibility of Online, Collaborative, Police Training

Chenelle A. Jones

Franklin University, chenelle.jones@franklin.edu

Alexander C. Heckman

Franklin University, alexander.heckman@franklin.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://fuse.franklin.edu/ss2018>



Part of the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jones, Chenelle A. and Heckman, Alexander C., "Can We Train Cops Virtually? Evaluating the Feasibility of Online, Collaborative, Police Training" (2018). *Scholars Showcase 2018: Innovations in Leadership and Learning*. 51.

<https://fuse.franklin.edu/ss2018/51>

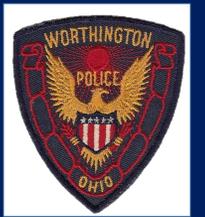
This Book is brought to you for free and open access by FUSE (Franklin University Scholarly Exchange). It has been accepted for inclusion in Scholars Showcase 2018: Innovations in Leadership and Learning by an authorized administrator of FUSE (Franklin University Scholarly Exchange). For more information, please contact karen.caputo@franklin.edu.



Can We Train Cops Virtually?

Evaluating the Feasibility of Online, Collaborative, Police Training

Chenelle A. Jones, Ph.D. & Alexander C. Heckman, Ph.D., Franklin University



Training as a Response to Police Shootings

High profile police shootings around the country have caused states and communities to examine how to improve the quality of policing. For example, reports from expert panels convened by Ohio's Governor and the Ohio Attorney General both recommended expanding law enforcement training requirements as a way to enhance the quality of policing. *However, the ability to improve policing through better in-service faces two key obstacles:*

- **Lack of resources:** Most police departments do not have the personnel or financial resources to provide regular, high quality training. Eighty-seven percent of police departments have 25 or fewer officers, which means they often lack the expertise and shift coverage to provide regular training during work shifts.
- **Variable quality of training:** Additional training requirements will not improve policing if the training is not high quality and does not focus on application in real-world contexts. Yet, in-service police training often involves sitting in a room listening to a lecture with little or no assessment or application of learning. It is well-established that lecturing is one of the least effective teaching methods and is not well-suited to teaching application in real-world situations.

The Search and Seizure Course

To determine whether high quality police training can be provided collaboratively, online, and cost effectively; Franklin University worked with several law enforcement agencies in Central Ohio to provide an online search and seizure training to police officers. The course consisted of 12 separate modules on different search and seizure topics.

Design of Each Course Module



Module Topics

- The 4th Amendment
- Probable Cause
- Plain View Searches
- Seizure
- Consent to Search
- K9 and Motor Vehicle Searches
- Unreasonable Search & Seizure, Exclusionary Rule, and Good Faith Exception
- Arrest
- Stop and Frisk
- Search Incident to Arrest
- Forcible Entry/Arrest for Minor Misdemeanor
- Search Warrants

Study Questions and Methods

Multiple data sources and methods were used to triangulate answers to the following questions:

1. **Would officers learn in an online course?**
 - a. Quiz Results: Students completed a pre and post quiz in each module. Paired samples tests were conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-quiz and the post-quiz scores.
 - b. Student Evaluations: Students were asked to complete evaluations of the design, instructional quality, and learning experience for each module. Aggregated student evaluation results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA to identify key issues and relationships.
 - c. Focus Groups: Officers and instructors were asked questions about their experience in the courses. Responses were coded and analyzed.
2. **What were officers attitudes toward online learning and would participating in an online course positively impact officers' perceptions of online training?**
 - a. Pre-Post Attitude Survey: Students completed a pre and post survey before the course and at the end of the course. Independent samples t-tests were used to evaluate pre-test and post-test scores on the attitude survey
 - b. Student Evaluations: See above
 - c. Focus Groups: See above
3. **Are their sizeable cost savings that can be achieved through delivering in-service training online and/or in interdepartmental collaboration?**
 - a. Simulated Cost Analysis: Realistic cost scenarios were generated to assess potential for cost savings for collaborative and online in-service training.

Key Findings

1. It is feasible to offer police training online if police departments collaborate with educational institutions that have expertise in designing and delivering online education.
2. It is critical to provide in-person orientation to the online learning management and provide an overview of the course and the rationale for completing the course online.
3. As much as possible, online elements of the course should be brief (15-minutes or less) and self-paced so that officers can complete training when time is available while on duty.
4. As much as possible, online courses should include interactive and engaging multimedia elements.
5. Online courses should include in-person instruction, particularly application of important knowledge and skills in realistic scenarios.
6. Online and collaborative can provide a path to less costly and more effective continuous in-service training, but only if culture and organizational changes are made to incorporate training into the regular routines of officers.



Scan to get the full study