

Use of NASJE Curriculum Designs

Taken together, the curriculum designs in this series provide an overarching plan for the education of judicial branch educators; this overarching plan constitutes a curriculum. Individually, each curriculum design and associated information provide faculty with resources and guidance for developing courses for judicial branch educators. Content from the curriculum will be used alongside other content as determined by the NASJE Education Committee.

The designs are based on the [NASJE Core Competencies](#). Two curriculum designs are provided for most competency areas, one for entry-level content and the other for experienced-level content. Content level relates to the participants' familiarity with the subject area and not their tenure in judicial branch education.

Each of the curriculum designs, based on the competency areas, may be used either in its entirety or in segments to meet the needs of the individual circumstance or situation, the particular audience, time constraints, etc.

Each curriculum design includes a series of learning objectives and an outline of content to support those learning objectives. Content is annotated with the bracketed number of the learning objective it supports. Learning objectives for each curriculum design are listed in order of importance or in a logical progression. Faculty is encouraged to select content based on the order of the learning objectives. Content is provided in an abbreviated outline format. Faculty may expand on the content based on the needs of the learners.

Associated information for each curriculum design includes: (a) resources for faculty's use (as reference and/or as participant handouts), and (b) a series of recommended participant activities to measure achievement of objectives. Each resource and participant activity has a cover sheet explaining its use. Faculty notes near the beginning of each curriculum design provide important information to assist faculty in effectively preparing to design and deliver a course.

Developing any course from a curriculum design will require that faculty (a) utilize an [instructional design model](#) (in the appendix), (b) employ [adult education principles](#) (next page), and (c) have an in-depth knowledge of the content beyond what is included in the design. A bibliography accompanies each curriculum design and contains additional sources of information. Because there are many sources for each content area that are not in the bibliography, faculty is encouraged to fully explore a variety of available sources when designing a course from a curriculum design.

The NASJE Curriculum Committee welcomes feedback, updates, corrections, and enhancements to these designs so they will remain current and viable.

Adult Education Principles

As learners mature, they change in terms of:

1. **Self-concept:** *They evolve from being dependent to self-directed.*
2. **Experience:** *They accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.*
3. **Readiness to learn:** *Their readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of their various roles.*
4. **Orientation to learning:** *Their time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly their orientation toward learning shifts from subject-centered to problem-centered.*
5. **Motivation to learn:** *Their motivation to learn is internal rather than externally generated. (Knowles, 1984).*

Effective learning for adults is dependent on faculty:

1. **Engaging learners actively in their learning:**
Adult learners generally prefer to participate, test new learning, and engage in discussion about the relevant content. Faculty needs to actively engage them at least 50% of the time through questions, activities, etc. and enable learners to discover how their new learning will serve them.
2. **Creating and maintaining an effective, safe learning environment:**
Adult learners will participate readily in an educational situation if the environment is physically and psychologically suitable. Physically suitable includes comfortable, well-lighted, and easily accessible space; psychologically suitable includes feeling welcome to offer opinions and differing views and to ask questions. Faculty needs to alter the physical environment to meet the needs of learners and to state and demonstrate that the learning situation is open and non-threatening.
3. **Demonstrating respect for differences:**
Adult learners are independent and self-reliant; they are of varied races, ethnicities, religions, backgrounds, experiences, and education. In an educational situation, they need to be respected for their differences, even if their experience and knowledge is different from faculty. Faculty needs to state and demonstrate their willingness to engage different views.
4. **Providing learners with information on what to expect:**
Adult learners prefer to understand what will happen in their learning and what will be expected of them in the learning environment. Faculty needs to provide an agenda, an overview, learning objectives, etc.
5. **Basing content on immediately applicable information and skills:**
Adult learners generally prefer to engage in learning that will help them in their daily lives and work. Faculty needs to ensure that theoretical information serves only as a background for practical application of new knowledge and skills.

[Instructional Design: The Backbone of Effective Education and Developing Faculty.](#) NASJE curriculum designs include additional information on adult education theory and practical application.