



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON FORENSIC SCIENCE

NIST
National Institute of
Standards and Technology
U.S. Department of Commerce

Forensic Science Curriculum Development

Subcommittee

Training on Science and Law

Type of Work Product: Adjudication of Public Comments on Draft Document

Public Comment Summary

Five public comments were submitted; some comments included several concerns. One comment was from a person who identified himself, three comments were anonymously submitted, and one comment was from a member of the American Society of Crime Lab Directors (ASCLD).

Adjudication Process Used by Subcommittee

A subcommittee member reviewed the public comments and prepared a written summary. The summary was disseminated to the entire subcommittee along with the final draft for approval.

Itemized Comments and Adjudications

As each comment addressed a different aspect of the document, the comments are presented by individual submitter, with the subcommittee's response and adjudications in italics.

1. John Kelly. Mr. Kelly's comment was about backlog at public crime labs.
2. *The subcommittee's adjudication is that this comment is inapposite.* Anonymous. The gist of comment was that groups such as AAAS and NIST might not be appropriate agencies to help develop curriculum because they don't deal directly with forensic disciplines, so development should be assigned to NIST OSACs.
The subcommittee's response is that we have revised the document to state that groups such as NIST and AAAS should design the curriculum "utilizing subject matter experts both outside of and within forensic disciplines as appropriate."
3. Anonymous. The comment recommends approval of the document.
The subcommittee agreed with the comment.
4. Anonymous. The commentor had three concerns.
 - A. Urged the subcommittee to eliminate a run-on sentence.
The subcommittee eliminated the run-on sentence.
 - B. Urged inclusion of forensic practitioners in curriculum development.
The subcommittee has added language about using some practitioners where appropriate in developing curriculum.
 - C. Urged that the subcommittee reconsider excluding DOJ from the entities that would help design the curriculum.

The subcommittee rejects the proposal regarding DOJ to ensure that any curriculum has the appearance of as well as actual impartiality.

5. Brady Mills, ASCLD. Mr. Mills had five comments.
 - A. Mr. Mills' first comment seemed to be ambiguous; it could be interpreted either as saying that the curriculum should also be for law enforcement and others such as researchers or that those who design the curriculum should be more diverse in background.
The subcommittee has modified the document to explain that the initial curriculum is for officers of the court but should be designed in a way to be adaptable for teaching other groups. As to those who help in designing the curriculum, that has been addressed in response to comment 2, above.
 - B. The document seems "accusational" toward DOJ.
The subcommittee explained its thinking about this in response to comment 4.C, above.
 - C. Because the curriculum may also address management of FSSPs and issues of social science that may come before the court, do NIST and other curriculum developers have the expertise to address these topics?
The subcommittee explained its thinking about this in response to comment 2, above, regarding who will help design curriculum.
 - D. Should the curriculum also address Forensic Medicine Service Providers?
The subcommittee accepted this and added this to the document.
 - E. Where will funding come from for using the curriculum once it is developed?
The subcommittee felt that this concern is beyond the scope of this document. While the curriculum is being developed, there can be separate work on finding delivery mechanisms and funding for the same.