

# California Assembly Bill 89

## Task Force Meeting Seven Summary

April 28, 2023

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. PST

### Meeting Highlights

The primary focus of Assembly Bill (AB) 89 Task Force Meeting Seven was to finalize recommendations and elements of the Modern Policing Degree Program. This meeting focused on recommendations regarding the minimum educational requirements for employment as a Peace Officer, courses in the Modern Policing Degree Program, credit for prior learning and experience, financial assistance for students of historically underserved and disadvantaged communities, and faculty teaching in the Modern Policing Degree Program. After the discussion on Task Force recommendations, Task Force members also provided input on the current draft of the student graduate profile.

### Task Force Meeting Seven Objectives

- Review draft AB 89 recommendations and continue to develop final recommendations for the Modern Policing Degree Program.
- Continue to finalize the student graduate profile for the Modern Policing Degree Program.

### Task Force Meeting Six Reflections

- Explored recommendations for increasing financial support for increased diversity of students enrolled in the Modern Policing Degree Program.
- Revisited the Division of Apprenticeship Standards apprenticeship model and its relationship to the Modern Policing Degree Program.
- Addressed ways to equalize the sponsored versus non-sponsored student experience.
- Identified parameters for maximizing credit for prior learning opportunities, including prior law enforcement, military, or other appropriate work experience or postsecondary education, to satisfy a portion of the employment eligibility requirements.
- Addressed potential conflicts with prior experience that could misalign with the new curriculum.
- Reviewed AB 89 discussion topics and associated recommendations and continued to develop final recommendations for the Modern Policing Degree Program.

### Minimum Educational Requirements for Employment as a Peace Officer

- Establish a Modern Policing Degree (associate degree in Policing) that is foundational to and preparation for a career as a Peace Officer, ideally to be completed before or concurrent with a Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-certified police academy, but no later than the date of appointment as a Peace Officer.

- Suggestions were offered to clarify the timing of when potential Peace Officers should obtain a Modern Policing Degree. Possible edits included adding “no later than date of appointment as a **sworn** Peace Officer.” Individuals can become Peace Officers only after they have completed the academy and have been sworn in as Peace Officers. To assist in financial aid, future Peace Officers can still be hired by agencies as trainees. These are at-will employees who can be sworn in as Peace Officers upon completion of the academy.
- Encourage colleges to offer a Modern Policing Degree pathway that may lead to a bachelor’s degree and with off-ramps into other majors, should the student decide not to complete the Modern Policing Degree.
  - In creating this specialized degree, Task Force members recommend that courses be Course Identification Number (C-ID)-approved to be accepted across California colleges to align with advanced degrees.
- Suggest that colleges currently operating a POST-certified police academy incorporate the components of the Modern Policing Degree into their existing courses of study, so students can complete an associate degree in Policing and the Police Academy certification.
  - To assist in executing this recommendation, some fire department programs can be modeled because their academy includes an associate degree.
  - A Task Force member suggested adding course requirements from college programs into the POST academy training, such as report writing. This requirement would create more cohesion between the Modern Policing Degree and the training academies.
  - Task Force members preferred this recommendation to indicate, “Require (or expect) that colleges currently operating...”
- Where courses are not already identified, use the existing C-ID process to facilitate a model curriculum and descriptor development to help ensure consistency in associate degrees in Policing.

## Relationship among the Modern Policing Degree Program, Current Police Academy Offerings, and Current Associate Degrees for Transfer Model Curriculum

- Task Force members recommend that the California Community Colleges develop the bachelor’s degree in Policing.
- For Associate Degrees for Transfer purposes, Task Force members recommend reviewing trainings and courses that law enforcement agencies require of cadets or newly sworn officers in addition to the basic academy trainings.

## Courses in the Modern Policing Degree Program

- Courses in the Modern Policing Degree (associate degree in Policing) Program should include those outlined in AB 89. In addition, development of the qualities, competencies, values, and desirable characteristics identified in the AB 89 Task Force’s student graduate profile should be incorporated where appropriate into existing or new courses that are part of the degree.
  - Include the list called out in AB 89: Psychology, Communications, History, Ethnic Studies (which is already part of California Community Colleges graduation requirements), Law,

and the following that contribute to officers' critical thinking skills and fewer use-of-force incidents:

- Sociology or Social Psychology, History of Policing, Racial and Cultural Diversity, Social Justice, Critical Thinking, Communication (interpersonal and cultural), Statistics, and Transformational Policing.
- Expand Policing in the Community, an existing C-ID–approved course, to include voices from the community.
- Include classroom-based courses that agencies are consistently requiring beyond the basic training academy.
- Encourage colleges, whenever feasible, to allow courses in the Modern Policing Degree Program to fulfill general education and major requirements.
  - Use double counting of core degree requirements.
- Allow colleges to be prescriptive in determining which courses in a general education category are mandatory.
  - This is not a high-unit degree and will eventually have a transferable component to higher education. In the meantime, this degree should be uniform across the state.
  - Provide core highlights of the Modern Policing Degree to colleges and faculty to help determine prerequisites.
- Encourage colleges to offer courses asynchronously, where appropriate to the content, activities, and outcomes of a course, to maximize flexible learning opportunities for students.

## Credit for Prior Learning and Experience

- Task Force members also recommended creating pathways for individuals who are looking to become a Peace Officer after another career. These individuals would include those who went through another academy type (e.g., corrections), attended a non-collegiate-affiliated program, or were in the military. There is no current credit for prior experience awarded by POST.
- Once courses are identified through the Modern Policing Degree, community college faculty, POST members, and academy personnel can develop crosswalks from students' various backgrounds.

## Financial Assistance for Students of Historically Underserved and Disadvantaged Communities

- Provide recommendations for increasing financial support for increased diversity of students enrolled in the Modern Policing Degree Program.
  - Task Force members recommend using institutional supports to assist students who need additional financial aid. These supports would include non-traditional funding sources at the academies and community colleges. Strong Workforce funds cannot directly aid students but can be used to purchase equipment for them to borrow during their time at the academy or college.
  - Classes created for the Modern Policing Degree Program should qualify for federal aid.
  - Units should be used effectively to maximize the learning experience without adding burden to the student covering the cost of each unit.



## Faculty Teaching within the Modern Policing Degree Program

- Review and modify, where necessary, minimum qualifications for community college academy instructors considering new minimum education requirements for Peace Officers.
  - Faculty assigned to teach in the Modern Policing Degree Program should have the qualifications to present the material. Equivalency models will need to be constructed to apply to law enforcement, or a similar background, which lends itself to this degree.
  - Faculty who are familiar with the Modern Policing Degree Program approach should be sought over those who have a general policing approach.
- Provide colleges with professional development resources to help ensure that full- and part-time faculty who teach in community college police academies stay current in their field and do not have to bear the full cost of remaining POST certified.
  - Establish Intermediate and Advanced POST certificates for instructors.

## Student Graduate Profile

- Culturally competent and equity minded
  - Peace Officers will know how to
    - understand bias and be aware of potential impacts of one's own biases on the actions one takes;
    - be aware of the various levels and symptoms of mental health disorders and understand how mental health disorders may affect actions of community members;
    - be self-aware;
    - be adaptable and flexible;
    - be open minded to non-traditional ideas, ways of thinking, and innovations; and
    - be aware of and sensitive to cultures in the community—their history and experiences in policing, languages, customs, beliefs, and gender identities.
- Critical thinker
  - Individuals will be critical thinkers who know how to use multiple perspectives when making decisions on the job. Peace Officers will
    - be able to critically analyze situations and use good judgment under stressful circumstances with limited information available;
    - use reasoning skills to draw conclusions based on different types of inputs, data sets, observations, and patterns;
    - provide examples of critical thinking and deductive reasoning skills; and
    - use reasoning to analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and summarize qualitative and quantitative information and data and be information literate (i.e., understand reliable data).
- Communicator
  - Individuals will be able to communicate in multiple ways with citizens of varied identities and community roles to support their work as a Peace Officer. Peace Officers will
    - use interpersonal communication skills,
    - use crisis communication skills,
    - use listening and comprehension skills to be an active listener,

- use problem-solving techniques while working in teams, and
- use appropriate communication skills and strategies to deescalate situations.
- Resilient
  - Individuals will be able stay balanced, manage strong or difficult circumstances or emotions, be able to face pressure and challenges and rebound from them, and be able to cope with a crisis using mental and emotional strategies. Peace Officers will
    - understand the need for mental health awareness in law enforcement, including long-term health awareness, and apply strategies to manage one’s mental health;
    - understand how to remain as calm as possible in any situation to create an optimal environment for decision making; and
    - be trauma informed—understand how trauma affects oneself as an individual Peace Officer; how it affects offenders, victims, and bystanders; and how it affects the communities being served.
- Desirable characteristics
  - Logical
  - Flexible
  - Adaptable
  - Mature
  - Emotionally intelligent (encompassing self-awareness, self-discipline, self-motivation, empathy, maturity)
  - Empathetic
  - Ethical

### Additional Recommendations: Student Graduate Profile

- Use the existing law enforcement code of ethics, which expects the highest standard possible, a code of conduct for work and for personal life.
- Highlight officer mentalities—guardians rather than warriors.
- Include a crosswalk from the competencies and values of students to the appropriate classes that will incorporate those skills.

### Other Recommendations

- Plan for a longitudinal study to evaluate whether educating Peace Officers about evidence-based policing addresses minimizing incidents involving the use of force.

## Appendix

### Resources

- 2022–2023 California Community Colleges Compendium of Allocations and Resources: <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/report/2022-23-compendium-of-allocations-resources-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=08EC6B44C81F5EF5FF83155E0254DB9F333B27DD>
- AB 458: [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202320240AB458](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB458)
- Standards and Training for Corrections: [https://www.bscc.ca.gov/s\\_standardsandtrainingforcorrections/](https://www.bscc.ca.gov/s_standardsandtrainingforcorrections/)
- Transfer and Articulation System for California’s Colleges and Universities: <https://c-id.net/>