

**Institute for Faculty Excellence in Judicial Education**  
***Program Evaluation***  
**Phase I**  
**October 24 – October 29, 2005**

The Institute for Faculty Excellence in Judicial Education held the first phase of a two-part program on October 24-29, 2005 at the Winter Park Mountain Lodge in Winter Park, CO. The following learning objectives were established during the curriculum planning phase of this program and were accomplished through a diverse approach that included lectures, interactive learning, group exploration and discussion, experiential learning opportunities, reflection, and other creative activities. Below are the learning objectives and methodology for achieving these goals.

Participants are able to:

- Enhance their ability to discern and describe those most cherished elements in the administration of justice and gain a fuller understanding of the nature of excellence in relation to judicial education through:
  - Reflection and self-assessment, discussions and interactive analysis, lecture, dialogue, and journal writing;
- Present an independent project they plan during Phase I of the Institute, exemplifying the principles of excellence that afford the opportunity to:
  - Apply learning theory in the fulfillment of their roles in judicial education and improving the administration of justice;
  - Express what it is in the administration of justice that they care most about through the completion of the project;
- Consider the contributions made to the self by vocational satisfaction, physical wellness, and psychological and emotional well-being through reflection, self-analysis, and self-assessment;
- Experience carefully designed educational experiences and activities that provide:
  - An understanding of the depth and richness of learning that is achieved by revisiting material from new perspectives;
  - The opportunity to gain acceptance of diverse means for becoming better learners and teachers and to integrate a greater repertoire of means for themselves.

## EVALUATION

The following scale of 1 to 7 was used to assess most responses. Participants were asked to circle the response they believed to be most appropriate.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7  
Disagree Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Agree Agree  
Strongly Slightly Strongly Slightly Strongly Strongly

### Instructional Sessions

A post program evaluation was administered, designed to assess the value participants placed on specific aspects of the program and to assess what participants gained as a result of attending Phase I of the Institute for Faculty Excellence in Judicial Education. Participants were asked to evaluate each session or activity in the program. Each instructor was evaluated, based on the level of knowledge related to the topic, state of preparedness, course and material organization, enthusiasm and interest in teaching, and openness to discussion and questions.

The following is a summary of responses to general questions related to the instructors and the material they presented using the scale of 1 = Disagree Strongly to 7 = Agree Strongly:

- The materials and ideas presented in sessions were helpful and I acquired new ideas and tools that will be useful in my work.  
*Responses ranged from 5.8-6.6.*
- The instructor demonstrated knowledge or expertise about the topic.  
*Responses ranged from 5.75-7.00.*
- The instructor was well prepared and instructional materials were well organized.  
*Responses ranged from 6.2-7.00.*
- The instructor demonstrated enthusiasm and interest in teaching.  
*Responses ranged from 5.75-6.9.*
- The instructor encouraged and was receptive to questions.  
*Responses ranged from 6.4-7.00.*

In general, participants viewed instructors as highly qualified, knowledgeable, and interested in their respective topics as demonstrated by the following comments:

- This was fun and served as a good group introduction to each other and made you think about yourself.
- The art project was fun –adults need to be able to play more –this was meaningful play, and helped us get acquainted with each other much better than chit-chat ever would have.
- Needed tape!
- Instructional materials, there were almost none.
- This was a great exercise which I resisted initially. It gave me more insight into how the public may think about who I am.
- Probably a good exercise for others. Not my learning style and I didn't get much out of the efforts of those who found it more interesting.
- I liked those lists (Exp. Learning)-very useful all week.

-I was frustrated by the premises of the LSI tests, and did not feel the results were valid or worth as much time as it took in the session.

-Perhaps some thought might be given to the placement of this program (journal writing)- on the one hand, it provided a reflective step between our exposure to experiential learning and the task-oriented introduction to the mentor-protégé piece. But having finished the former with the program-creation exercise, momentum was lost I thought by not going right into the beginnings of our won projects. Not too many people acknowledged journaling, but it might have been interesting to encourage those who did to speak about what and why. The “poem” piece was nicely structured, but should have been allotted more time—even at the expense of a powerpoint slide or two—so we could have completed it and had more sharing.

-First session was not that helpful—perhaps because the topic seemed unfinished—as it was —because of the divided sessions. The mentor-mentee relationship was presented as for more supervisory and directive than I see it (more supportive and personal).

-This was nicely presented, and got us well-involved during the allotted time, addressing the central focus of our commitment: THE PROJECT. One day later, though, I feel slighted by the “forced choice” of 1) staying on after the program, when attention and spirit were flagging, or 2) meeting in our “mentor group” after supper, and missing the movie. Our group chose the latter, to very productive effect. But the movie turned out to be a key introductory piece to Dave Furman’s difficult material today!!! Conclusion: the mentor groups should have been allotted the evening slot. The movie should be worked into the curriculum differently.

-This was helpful in trying to integrate the theoretical perspectives with the practical application to our project. We were given an opportunity to transfer what we learned.

-I enjoyed this presentation very much. The more I can learn about the brain, the more I understand the relationship between emotion, thinking and learning.

-This was a great session (anatomy of judicial decision-making).

-Very good session.

-Too many references to “last night’s movie”

-This is only the second time, I have been involved in a law and literature session. I think I’m hooked! I learn well using this method.

-I don’t think this session used the concepts of “experiential learning” as presented to us.

-I definitely understand this but not necessarily as a result of this session.

-The discussion was great, and definitely helped me to consider the story more deeply.

-I enjoyed the poem.

-Newspaper article not a very good basis for legal issues raised.

-Good discussion. Most of us could’ve benefited more from some concrete actual experience with persons from a different culture or country. Or other stories from *Brother Boy* (or the like).

-This was somewhat vague hard to grasp from a practical perspective.

-I loved the film (“Everyday Creativity”). I will now look at the ordinary and try to make it extra-ordinary.

-This was great fun—and inspiring to look, look, look differently.

-Loved the video.

-The film is pretty. Bob enthusiastically made the connections to finding passion in everyone’s life work, especially judicial education. It provides a break from the more challenging theoretical material presented earlier. That said, I think most of us could have better used the time to work on project preparation, so that the “relaxation” piece afforded by the chance to ride the bus to the nat’l park, or walk the nature trail, would not have felt so potentially compromised by the looming presentation.

- I liked the video. It was packed with so much good information of how to respond to a [unknown] when you have [unknown] in what you do. There was a lot to think about. It was refreshing.
- I believe I already understood that.
- I feel so fortunate to have had Pat as a teacher and to learn from her these valuable principles.
- Materials could be more detailed for this particular session.
- Short, but good recap of material already presented.
- This session did not provide as much insight as the earlier sessions on the topic. It was more of a summary.
- Most motivating was long-term health effects—at age 80.
- The speaker is obviously fit and trim.
- But did not “go around circle” or look at subject in any new ways. (motivation/will power is key obstacle)
- The things which many people need to do are to lose weight and exercise more. This is not news. In some ways, I feel our right to privacy on these issues (re: the website) was invaded by the questions asked. Ideas suggested—“mindful eating,” “mindful grocery shopping” were helpful; also “social-life exercise” and buddy system—portion control—(weighing food)—herbal teas
- The presenter put a lot of effort in the presentation. The presenter did a lot of research. The presenter had not totally internalized the information. She was not able to totally manipulate the information. There was a lot of food for thought. I really enjoyed the wellness survey.
- I think I had a pretty solid feel for the importance of this topic before hand, but I appreciated the session nonetheless.
- This program made me realize that I do not need to know everything about the “subject” in order to teach it. I am a learner, also.
- Good wrap up session—Bob was cut short by snow, but handled gracefully.
- Good presentation

Participants also were asked to assess: 1) how well what they gained from sessions contributed to their understanding of what it is in the administration of justice that they care most deeply about; 2) how aspects of the program contributed to a deeper understanding of learning theories and program planning processes; 3) how what they have learned contributed to their personal and professional lives; 4) the value of journal writing; and 5) the value of mentor/mentee planning and preparation.

In response to these questions, responses ranged from **5.73 to 6.92** on the scale of 1 = Disagree Strongly to 7 = Agree Strongly. Comments representative of this include:

- This exercise, the first of many, took me outside my comfort zone. My left brain went to war with my right. I was delighted to find so much artistic talent and expressiveness bubbling out of my fellow students. As ice breaker, it was novel. More importantly, it introduces the tension between self-concept and public figure that is too infrequently examined as a factor in judging...recapitulates brilliantly in “best interests of the child.”
- This was the most valuable program for me. Everything I learned had a connection to my work.
- As with much else, the progression from exposure, reflection, understanding to practical utility seems slightly elusive. But I’m committed to remaining cheerfully engaged, keeping the devil advocating from a remove.
- Excellent! This was a topic that had practical application for work and social interaction.

-I have never used a journal, even though I own five of them. This program brought home for me finally why I should be journaling. I had this idea that journaling was for bad times in my life only.

-I recognize the value of this session but I am not sure if this is something I will do.

-I loved this seminar because it gave me a way to re-start journal writing. The strategies and examples were excellent. Receiving actual journal was a real treat. To have us do a journal exercise in our new journals gave us an opportunity to practice journal writing while we were full of enthusiasm. Great!

-This could turn out to be one of the most helpful sessions—or not. I'll know more by April.

-The journal writing was presented in what seemed a completely personal context, like a nice hobby. While there could be a connection to judging or educating judges, I don't think that connection received any focus. (e.g. value of judicial books).

-The exercise (mentoring) was very valuable. Also the assistance from my mentor on my choice of a topic and 5 minute presentation was valuable.

-This was a difficult session so far, primarily to its ambitious scope. In retrospect—and the experiential exposure to the NSCD program as a follow-on was provident—the “pointillistic” presentation was more effective than I felt as I was struggling through it. Summary of impressions two sessions later: 1) The working of the brain is rocket science, and anybody who proposes to teach it in 90 minutes “must have rocks in his head” (a quote from my teacher/father). 2) Dave was daring and provocative, and I agree that the “10 commandments” he left with us is a useful synthesis—of material that possibly defies the approach he took to it. 3) Calling the presentation “Anatomy of judicial decision-making” was kind of cute. I wonder if I'm alone, though in thinking that this was one illusionist's trick too many.

-I love this session because it gave insight into learning that is often left out of the teaching experience. This complex information, but presented in a manner that was not intimidating to person without a science background.

-One of the best chosen “humanities” pieces I've encountered in judicial education. I've been reading the rest of the parables each night, and the appreciation for Morris' insight into the human demands of judging well grows ever deeper.

-This was an interesting book. I think the facilitator did an excellent job bringing out the important points of the book applicable to judicial education.

-This is true as to judicial decisions makers and the various ways decisions are reached.

-Our breakfast session helped me put into perspective this issue (cultural competence). I agreed with the observation that this is more appropriate by cultural “sensitivity” in the context of judging.

-The materials were well-suited to the topic. There was a good discussion of whether “competence” is a misguided term for the judicial skills being emphasized. There was little disagreement—by me, or in the group—that enhanced awareness of how cultural differences might impact adjudication is useful. Everyone also appeared to reflect that training issue is difficult, beyond buzzwords. The test is always in the circumstances.

-The materials about the Memphis case were helpful to me in clarifying my thought about the proper role of the judge in cases where cultural sensitivity is important. Also, cultural sensitivity as opposed to cultural competence.

-Some stress deals with the emotional content of our work and with our colleagues or people we work with. I would like more information on how to deal with difficult colleagues, co-workers and litigants.

-For us “back-niners,” this is important material (wellness) to reflect on. As we try to teach and judge for the long haul. The best parts were the discussion and sharing, which Susan did a good job promoting. The “readings” could be cut by at least ½.

-This was an excellent session because it was a very reflective session. This session gave the participants an opportunity to use their experiences as teacher or learner. The participants were introduced to another strategy for improving teaching techniques.

### **Experiential Learning Opportunities**

The objective of the experiential learning opportunities (ELOs) was to afford participants an opportunity to engage in experiences that: 1) focus on an individual's or organization's passion and commitment to their work that results in a positive impact on individuals or a community; and/or 2) expose them to the local context of the Institute. To provide such an opportunity, faculty and participants learned about a unique organization, the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD), which is located in Winter Park. The ELO included a presentation about the Center's programs, a discussion led by a person who was in the NSCD downhill skiing program and a paraplegic, and a hands-on activity at the NSCD's adaptive campground where IFEJE group members were asked to perform tasks while dealing with a "disability". For example, a small group of participants wore a blindfold while trying to set up camp. Another small group attempted to put on ski clothes without using one side of their body. Participants were asked to rate and comment on the following: (1) I gained a deeper understanding of experiential learning as a result of hearing the speaker and participating in the tour and exercises; and, (2) The experience helped me understand how passion in one's work can leave a legacy and can positively impact individual's lives.

Responses to these questions ranged from **6.67-6.80** on the scale of 1 = Disagree Strongly to 7 = Agree Strongly. Comments representative of this include:

- The presentation helped me understand better the Kolb circle of learning. Personally, I benefited from new knowledge about the disabled and this wonderful program.
- I learned so much from this session. It had me thinking about an area that we see everyday from a different perspective. We were given tools to help us internalize this learning experience. Great!
- Evening (processing) session nice, but too long—we need some "downtime." Some additional application to courts would be good and sensitivity among other things to our participants' physical limitations.
- Dynamite!
- This was a perfect capstone to the very rich and varied experiential learning challenges, tying many of the lessons from Dave's piece, and "best interests of the child," into the real life encounter.
- Good session and break in style from the other sessions.

## Additional Institute Elements and Processes

Participants were asked to evaluate the coordination and administrative aspects of the program based on the same scale of 1 = Disagree Strongly to 7 = Agree Strongly. Below are the averages of their responses.

### **Average Scores:**

- a. Communication prior to the institute was timely and helpful.  
**6.33**
- b. Opening activities (arrival, check-in, and the opening session) went smoothly.  
**6.78**
- c. The institute notebooks and materials were beneficial.  
**6.89**
- d. The full group discussions were beneficial.  
**7.0**
- e. Both scheduled and free time were provided in a balanced way.  
**5.38**
- f. The Winter Park Mountain Lodge served as an effective site for the institute. **5.67**

### **Comments:**

- More info on projects and early assignment would've been beneficial
- Very little to no free time makes the week very wearing
- Needs routine transportation
- Needs business center
- Need more time to explore and see the area
- The facilities weren't great, but the staff was.

Participants also were asked to rate the importance of educating court personnel about cultural competence and awareness issues and then comment about their own experience:

- a. I agree that it is important for judicial educators, judges, and other court personnel to be culturally aware (i.e., awareness of diverse perspectives, beliefs, and value systems)?  
**6.78**

How effective was this program in fulfilling the need to assist Judicial Educators, judges, and other court personnel become more culturally aware?

- It helped me understand how knowledge about other cultures can impact decision-making, why it is important information and proper use of the knowledge.
- Our Courts are becoming increasingly diverse

-The Story from *Brothel Boy* and Patti's story about the Afghani judges were very effective in doing this.

-Very effective!

-This program has given me such great new insight. I was introduced to a new way of thinking and way to apply it in my life and work.

--Very Good

- b.** Are there cultural differences in your court to learn about and if so, how are you going to increase awareness?

-Suggest cultural sensitivity programs to our education commission concerning some of the minority populations in our state.

-This just serve as a reminder that I am responsible for making this happen.

**Participants were asked to respond to the following open-ended questions. Here are the questions and their responses.**

**1. What are the most important things that you are taking away from this program?**

-Abstract conceptualization is not alone enough for people to learn. Passion for the topic you teach is essential. A good teacher involves the learners emotionally.

-Better ways to teach. Better way to do good education. I [unknown] to plan in my court.

-The courage to "do a program".

-New ideas on how to teach and learn.

-A renewed appreciation for the human breadth of judges, as exemplified by this special group of new colleagues. Acknowledgement (occasionally begrudging) that a deeper understanding of learning styles will make me a better teacher and a better judge.

-A methodology for ensuring that I teach I am aware of the different adult learning styles and incorporate those styles in any presentation.

-Re-examining Kolb, mentor assistance, group dynamics

-It broke me out of a lecture style of communication into a "multi-flex" offensive

**2. What are the three things that you will do as a result of your having participated in this program?**

- a.** -Plan and develop a program on judicial decision-making and the constitution for high school teachers.

-Be a better teacher

-Work hard in my program

-Keep teaching—including my project, but also from the bench, in the schools, in the community.

-Journal on a regular basis

-Continue to use Kolb's circle in our programs

-Visualize my presentation from the students' perspective

- b.** -Approach my work and personal life with a new view of judging, learning and teaching.

-Be a better conference organizer.

- Will work on cultural diversity training for my staff
- Follow through with my wellness commitment to mindful eating
- Follow a regular wellness routine
- Better health—wellness
- Try to maximize the means I interplay between presenter and student

- c.
- Try yoga and look for a hobby.
  - Work extra hard for the next six months.
  - Continue to develop and make friends with other participants
  - Read all the rest of the Nerval Morris Parables ( I finished four others during the conference)
  - Continue to practice the Kolb learning style method
  - I can change things

### **3. What are the long-term plans that you have for your project?**

- I would like to present my project annually. I hope that the number of teachers would grow each year in attendance and that the program would extend to a couple of days at least.
- Not clear to me yet
- Prepare it for April in Santa Fe—Present it at VT judicial College (“judge camp”) in June
- I plan to pilot the project in Washington, DC, then take it national to other states and ultimately international
- Possible presentations in other states and other courts in UT
- Engage my peers with a set of issues important to me and, I think to them. Then consider whether the presentation can be adapted horizontally (similar courts in other states) or vertically (other courts in my state).

### **4. What will you tell others about the Institute for Excellence in Judicial Education experience?**

- This is a unique program that offers personal growth, intellectual stimulation and a renewed faith in the judges on our court benches!
- Highly recommend for those who enjoy being a judge
- To do it if they have the opportunity
- If you are passionate about the learning opportunities inherent in judging, you owe it to yourself to go through it!
- I will encourage my court to send more judges to this program. It is life changing and will only make them better judges. The program also helps improve over all quality of life.
- GO!!
- It generated energy and enthusiasm.

### **5. What suggestions do you have for improving this program for future participants?**

- I have only a couple of suggestions: 1) We need a half-hour to a full hour at the end of the afternoon session. Perhaps 4:30 to 5:30 pm. We could exercise, unwind, etc.
- 2) Hold the program at site that has a business center or internet service. It should also have an adequate exercise facility.

- Could be a day shorter, or at least a little more free time. Closer to a city or other place can get R & R.
- After we “present” our 5 mins—then that afternoon could be a free or sightseeing activity—judicial wellness—I was really tired during this the adrenalin let down!
- If we are serious about wellness, we should find conference sites that would serve delicious and healthy food!! And tell them we don't need to be tempted by super-sized portions.
- Build in more time for participants to internalize the Kolb methodology in as much as it is the underpinning for the majority of the activities.
- None