

National Fire Academy Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Course: Cultural Competence in Risk Reduction (R0394)

Curriculum: Fire Prevention: Public Education
Fire Prevention: Management
Fire Prevention: Technical

This six-day National Fire Academy (NFA) course seeks to improve cultural and linguistic determinants within the application of risk-reduction strategies. This course aims to connect fire/Emergency Medical Services prevention personnel with diverse and cultural groups with the communities they serve, specifically to increase the reach and effectiveness of fire and life safety prevention services and programs. “Cultural Competence in Risk Reduction” (CCRR) is designed for a variety of prevention specialists such as public fire and life safety educators, inspectors, juvenile fire setter intervention specialists, fire marshals, and code enforcers.

The course applies a risk-reduction model, which is used in several other NFA courses, as the context to discuss and interact with aspects of cultural competence. The cultural aspects that this course deals with are nationality and language (other than English), although the principles of cultural competence taught in this course can be applied in any multicultural environment. Students learn that these populations can be potentially hidden, underserved and/or emerging within their communities.

The course is not about any one particular culture but about the building blocks of culture that correspond to four broad categories of human experience. **NOTE:** Other NFA courses and U.S Fire Administration risk-reduction efforts focus on reaching specific populations characterized by urban inner city residents, rural residents, older adults, young people (from zero to five years), socioeconomic class, and disability populations. These populations are not part of this course.

The course introduces students to four fundamental dimensions or building blocks of culture that correspond to four broad continuums of cultural similarities and differences.

These four building blocks of culture are:

1. Concept of self — individualist and collectivist.
2. Personal versus societal responsibility — universalist and particularistic.
3. Concept of time — monochronic and polychronic.
4. Locus of control — internal and external.

The paperback book “Figuring Out Foreigners — A Practical Guide” is used in class, along with a complete Student Manual with text and activities.

Two contract instructors will be required to teach each offering of CCRR — one risk-reduction instructor and one cultural competence instructor. Contractors for the risk-reduction role will be drawn from the fire service with primarily risk-reduction experience and knowledge. Contractors for the cultural competence role will be drawn from the field of cultural competence experts. Separate bidding lists will be created for each category. This provides the team with a balanced leadership/technical expertise and strongly reflects the composition of the course. The requirements for each role are listed below. Applicants should select the most appropriate category — either risk reduction or cultural competence — and submit a packet which addresses that category's instructional criteria only.

All new contract instructors shall be evaluated in three consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the NFA's Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

1. Applicants not meeting the basic criteria as listed on the general requirements (found on NFA's Web page) will not qualify.
2. Applicants should submit a resume that includes at a minimum: name, address, phone numbers, employment history and references. Please note that resumes do not necessarily provide adequate responses to each criterion. All applicants should select the appropriate role first and then submit a response that addresses that criteria.

Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection: Risk-Reduction Category Requirements

A response that addresses each of the criteria listed below must be submitted. Candidates should have attained a fully professional level in each item. Factors under consideration include experience, level and extent of activity, and leadership skills. In addition to meeting the general criteria for the instructor selection process, the potential instructor must provide information for the following requirements:

1. Academic Requirement

The candidate must possess an earned graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. Consideration will be given to those applicants who possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. Executive Fire Officer graduates are preferred. Academic degrees should be in a discipline closely related to those subjects covered in this course, public administration, emergency management, public health, etc.

2. Instructional Experience

Candidates must have successfully completed a recognized educational methodology course and must demonstrate successful instructional delivery to adult learners at local, regional, state and/or federal fire service training academies, colleges or universities. Candidates must be proficient in the facilitation of intensive, small work groups.

3. Chief Officer (Lead) Qualifications

- a. The candidate must have experience as a chief officer of a department or as a division/deputy chief officer at the second level of the organization. This is needed to ensure the instructor has the experience developing and implementing organizational strategy, establishing department policy, and working with senior appointed and elected officials. And many of these organizational skills relate to an organization's need and response to cultural competence requirements.
- b. Other minimum qualifications should include:
 - Experience establishing policy, establishing and implementing organizational or program goals and objectives, managing a department or division budget, and management of some type of change in the department (program implementation, change in types of services delivered, staff increase or decrease, etc.)
 - Experience supervising and implementing prevention activities in a fire department. May be at the company, division or department level. This may include public education, code enforcement, plans review, fire investigations, or a combination.
 - Experience in fire department emergency operations.
 - Direct experience working with local senior appointed and/or elected officials as part of formal fire department responsibilities.
 - Experience facilitating senior manager level discussions, debate, and small and large group activities.

4. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. teaching a similar course at the college or university level;
- b. taking a similar course within the last five years;
- c. teaching the course at the NFA or in the field within the last two years; or
- d. writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least one of the fire service or related disciplines' trade journals within the last two years.

Failure to provide approved documentation of ongoing training or instruction may result in revocation of the contract instructor status.

Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection: Cultural Competence Category

1. Academic Requirement

The candidate should possess a bachelor's or master's degree from an institution that is accredited. Preferred concentration or major field of studies should be in cultural competence, intercultural communication, international relations, or related fields.

2. Instructional Experience

Applicants must demonstrate that they have or can effectively teach basic intercultural communication skills to people who may have little understanding of this subject matter.

Applicants must provide examples of training/presentation skills in cross-cultural communication.

3. Documented Knowledge and Experience of the Subject Area

a. Minimum of five years of experience in one of the following fields or related fields.

- Intercultural communications.
- International human resources management.
- International relations.
- Cultural competence.

Applicants must be currently employed in one of the fields (above) or in a complimentary field. Applicants' experience may involve training, consulting, speaking, writing or other related tasks.

b. Applicants must state in their response that they understand and can teach the following building blocks of culture (and the continuums that each represent)

- Concept of self — individualist and collectivist.
- Personal versus societal responsibility — universalist and particularist.
- Concept of time — monochromic and polychromic.
- Locus of control — internal and external.

4. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. teaching a similar course at the college or university level;
- b. taking a similar course within the last five years;
- c. teaching the course at the NFA or in the field within the last two years; or
- d. writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least one of the fire service or related disciplines' trade journals within the last two years.

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Submit cover letter, resume and documentation to:

National Fire Academy
Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
16825 South Seton Ave.
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727
fema-nfainstructorapp@fema.dhs.gov