AECT 2016 Design & Development Competition
Problem Statement

Designing Instruction and Training for State Park Seasonal Employees

The State of Nevada hires dozens of seasonal employees each year to work in its state parks (http://parks.nv.gov/employment/). They have decided that an improved education and training program will help guarantee employees who are better informed in public safety and federal regulations, better prepared, more likely to stay in their positions for an entire season, and who will be more valuable when returning as more senior employees, ready to lead and mentor other staff.

The Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has initiated a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an education and training company to create a program that meets their needs, has an acceptable budget, and can be ready in time for the spring/summer 2017 hiring season. Training can be fully online or hybrid. There is an expectation that any system will have strong digital components.

Because of the variety of positions and locations, this training must focus on the larger issues of safety, public service, and legal/compliance concerns. Both the Nevada State Parks (http://parks.nv.gov/) and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (http://dcnr.nv.gov/) web sites provide useful background information in these areas.

Training will be developed for three groups. All groups will receive instruction in public safety and federal regulations for national parks. In addition, the following group-specific training will be provided:

1. Prospective employees—this training should give an overview of the system, deliver basic information about the system and opportunities, and outline expectations of employees regarding their responsibilities and duties.
2. Newly hired employees—this training should review some of the training of the previous group and also describe important legal and logistical elements of working for the state, including payroll, code of conduct, benefits, and professionalism.
3. Returning employees—this training should revisit content for the previous groups, and also describe opportunities for leadership and mentorship, teach principles of leadership and mentorship, and give exemplary exercises to illustrate learning.

All of these stages of training should have assessment components and feedback mechanisms to help determine each learner’s progress and readiness for employment at the given levels. For prospective employees, the feedback should help directors to determine whom to hire and what types of jobs to assign. For new
hires, the feedback should help directors make appropriate assignments of specific positions and locations and build good working teams at each site. Assessment of returning employees during training will inform directors’ decision making regarding advancement and responsibilities, and to whom to assign less experienced workers for best results.

The RFP stipulates three stages to the competition for this contract.

Phase I of the Competition
For the initial proposal, your team will create a document outlining your plan to train prospective employees and current employees in the areas outlined above. The first proposal must be detailed enough to give a sense of what you intend to do, but should not be the final product in full detail. The document will help the Department administrators decide whether your team should continue to work on your plan and eventually submit a more complete proposal. The creation of this document is your first task. This document must be submitted by April 1, 2016 for complete consideration. An administrative liaison will be available to answer your questions about the context/circumstances of the problem. Up to six proposals from Phase One will be selected to proceed to Phase Two, for which a formal and complete proposal of your entire solution to the problem will be required.

To be considered to move on in the competition, your Phase One proposal must include:

1. Recap of the problem being addressed
2. Training strategy with appropriate theoretical grounding [Design Model]
3. Instructional technology to be used to implement the training
4. Project Timeline
5. Program Evaluation Plan
6. Draft Funding/Budget and any additional staffing requirements
7. No identifying information. Failure to remove personal information, names, and institutional information will result in automatic disqualification from the competition.

Each submission will be from a team of two graduate students working together to solve the problem. Graduate students do not need to be from the same university, however all participants must be members of AECT and the Design and Development Division of AECT by the final phase of the competition (Phase Three).

Phase II of the Competition
If the Parks Administration determines that your proposal represents a viable solution for the Department, you will work with an independent learning consultant (a mentor) who will be assigned to help you develop what will become your final plan. You will create a detailed description of the process you propose and the means by which you will deliver it. As much as possible, justifications for the decisions that went into your proposal need to be provided. The creation of the
process, pilot program, and training examples is your second task. These components will be due on August 15th, 2016. The top three proposals from Phase Two will be invited to make a presentation to the judging panel at the AECT Annual Convention in the third and final phase.

**Phase III of the Competition**

If your team designs one of the top staff development education plans to address training for state parks seasonal employees, you will be asked to make a 30-minute presentation to the NDCNR Training Advisory Board where they will select which proposal to fund. At the 2016 AECT annual conference each selected team will have 30 minutes to present (20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for questions) their solution to the NDCNR Training Advisory Board. A team of expert faculty will play the role of the NDCNR Training Advisory Board members/judges. The judges will deliberate and one team will be selected to receive the contract, which means winning the AECT 2016 Design and Development Competition!

Announcement of the final competition participants and results is made at the 2016 Design and Development Division Luncheon during the 2016 AECT Annual Convention. Please note that if a team is selected to move on to Phase III of the competition, both team members from the team must be present at the AECT 2016 Annual Convention to present in this final phase of the competition. For additional information and the 2016 timeline, visit the Website: http://www.aect.org

**The AECT Design and Development Competition Planning Committee**

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