

School shootings spur training course for security officers

BY ANNIE ZAK
STAFF WRITER

In the wake of several school shootings in recent years, Golden West College is launching a program to train people who want to become campus safety officers or simply wish to broaden their knowledge of campus safety.

The campus safety officer course, which will be administered through the community college's Criminal Justice Training Center, is a five-week course over five consecutive Saturdays starting March 1 and costs \$300 per person.

Students will learn how to notice behavior in people who could later be dangerous and how to respond to campus emergencies and conflict resolution.

After taking the class, students will have the training required to get a state security guard card.

A student would still need to take an additional firearms course outside of Golden West if he wanted to become an armed guard.

The program is a result of a safety symposium held last summer at Golden West in which school safety officers and local education officials gathered to figure out how to prepare for what they called "low-frequency, high-risk events" such as school shootings.

Arthur Cummins, an administrator for safe and healthy schools at the Orange County Department of Education, said that in comparison to some



MINDY SCHAUER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Current and former law-enforcement officers, from left, Joseph Chirillo, Jess Gilman, Mike Colver and John McLaughlin were involved in developing the campus security officer training course for Golden West College.

A look at the program

Golden West College's new campus safety officer training course aims to give potential security guards and people who are regularly at schools a comprehensive understanding of how to notice warning signs for dangerous behavior and deal with emergencies.

When: Starting March 1, for five consecutive Saturdays. The class will be repeated based on interest.

Cost: \$300 per person, plus \$25 for materials.

Registration deadline: Feb. 20

Basic instruction: Training about laws, social media issues, adolescent behavior, disasters and emergencies, mediation and conflict resolution.

Source: goldenwestcollege.edu

training courses, Golden West's program is more updated in light of school shootings in the past 10 years.

"It's research-based as well as field-based," he said. "The curriculum (gives) basic things for anyone working with youth and



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Santa Monica College students leave flowers at a memorial after a fatal shooting last year at the school.

young adults as far as dealing with escalating behavior, but also tactical information and protocol for shootings."

One private firm, an Irvine company called Evidence-Based Inc., is sending all of its officers through the training course.

Employees of Evidence-Based Inc., which recently signed a \$1.4 million contract to put armed guards on campuses in Beverly Hills public schools, will be the first to go through the program.

"We knew that the state has minimal training requirements per se for a basic security officer to be allowed onto a campus," said John McLaughlin with Evidence-Based Inc., which helped Golden West develop the course. "We felt that was not adequate even as a starting point. The whole concept was to come up with a standardized training model."

Colleene Preciado, the academy coordinator of Golden West's Specialized Investigator's Basic Course, said while Evi-

dence-Based Inc. will be the first to enroll, she will be sending a brochure about the program to schools and school districts.

"I would love to have PTA members go through this course, janitors, custodial staff - whoever is on a campus at any time," she said. "This course is for them, in addition to people who want to do this for a living."

The class will be taught by a team that includes people who work in law enforcement, school public safety, mental health and school administration.

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