

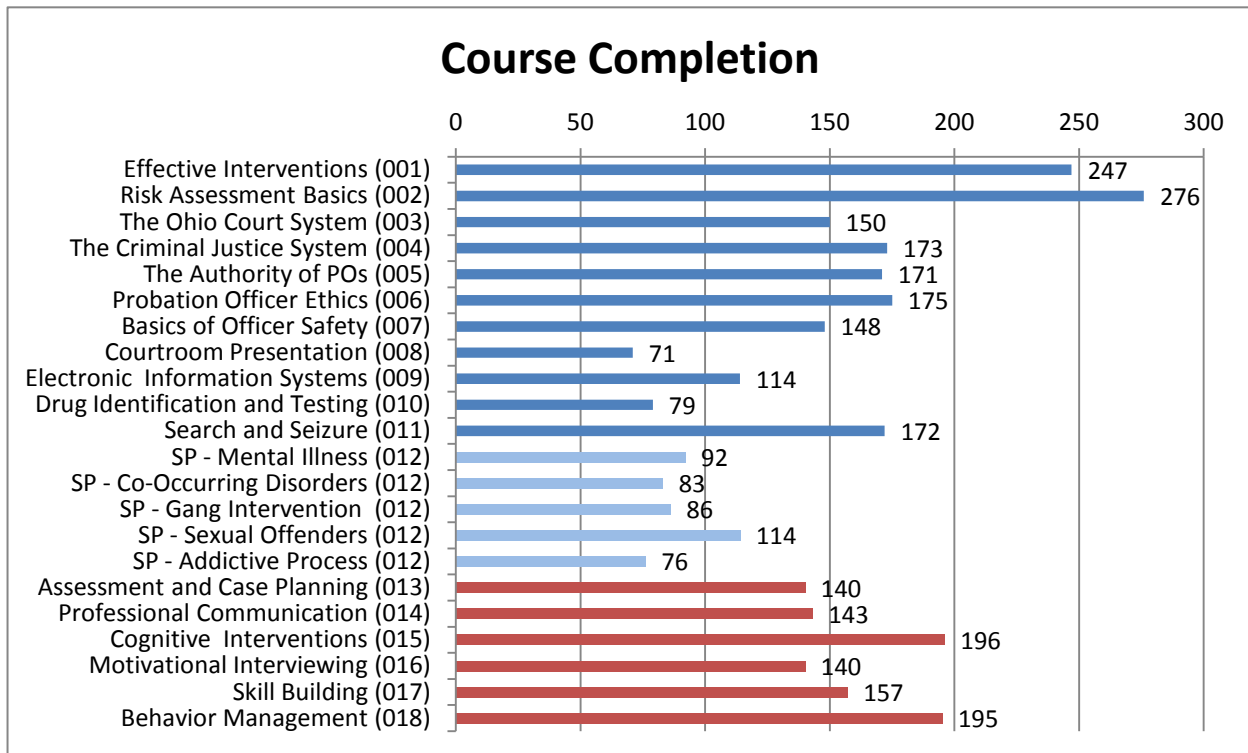
# Ohio Probation Officer Training Program Data Summary 2014

In accordance with Ohio R.C. 2301.271, adult probation officers hired after January 1, 2014 must complete an introductory training program within one year of their hire date. As a result, the Ohio Probation Officer Training Program was developed through a partnership between the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction (ODRC), the Supreme Court of Ohio Judicial College (SCOJC), and the Ohio Chief Probation Officers Association (OCPOA). The program curriculum was developed by a committee of personnel from ODRC, SCOJC, and OCPOA, including chief probation officers from urban and rural common pleas, municipal, and county courts. It consists of six face-to-face and twelve online courses.

This is a summary of data from the Ohio Probation Officer Training Program, January to December of 2014.

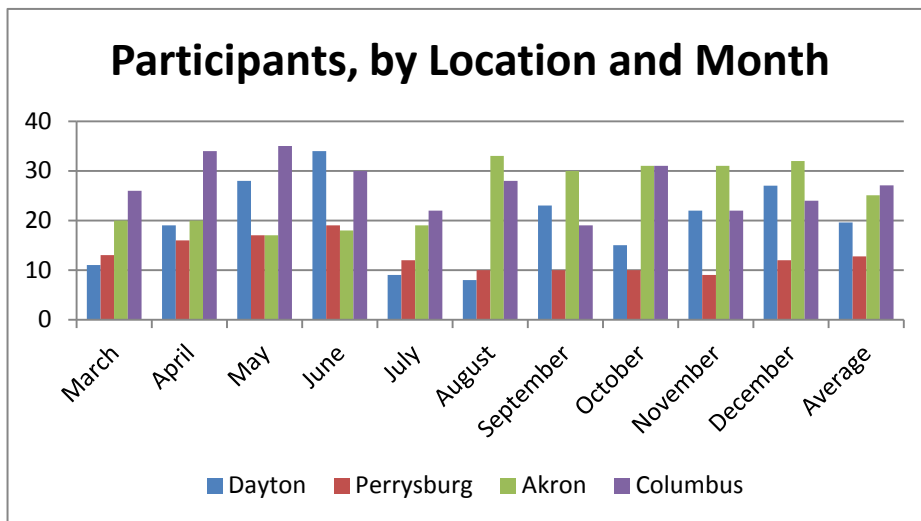
## Introduction

Over 550 probation officers (n=581) have participated in Probation Officer Training Program courses, with a total of 3,198 course completions. Of these course completions, 70% (n=2,227) were online and 30% (n=971) were in face-to-face settings.



Courses are offered in two formats: online and face-to-face. The twelve online courses are asynchronous (on-demand), which allows participants to complete them as their schedule allows. They are offered through two systems, both of which use the Relias Learning Management System and differ primarily in payment structure. **The main Relias system is where most have taken their courses (n=398, 93%); an alternate system through Relias, CE Quick, has 32 users taking courses.**

A total of 46 face-to-face courses have been offered. The courses have been offered 40 times on the planned schedule in Dayton, Perrysburg, Akron, and Columbus, and the graph below displays attendance by location. To accommodate a large increase in staffing at the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation in Correction, six additional course offerings were hosted at the Corrections Training Academy in Orient. At face-to-face courses, attendance has averaged 22 people, or 74% of maximum capacity, and attendance is at 99% of registration. There has been an average no-show rate of 3% and an average walk-in rate of 2%. Six course offerings had waitlists with an average of 10 people waitlisted.



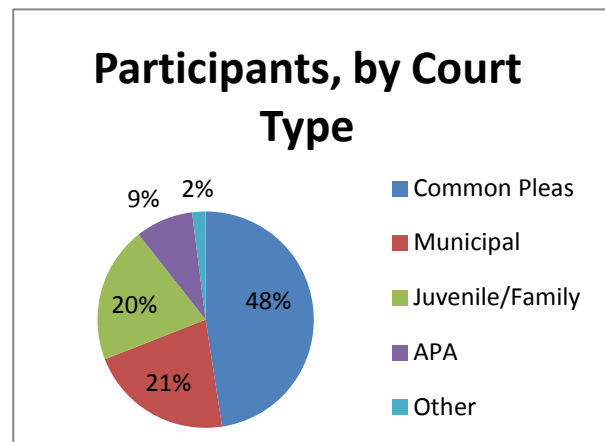
In the first year, 24 individuals completed the full program. As the hiring anniversaries for more probation officers approach, this should increase significantly. In addition to those who completed the full program, there are 38 other individuals who have completed at least 90% of the curriculum.

Over two-thirds (n =404, 70%) of all participants have taken more than one face-to-face or online course. Because only 25% (n=144) of current participants are mandated to complete the full program, **this demonstrates that these courses are perceived as beneficial, even when not required.**

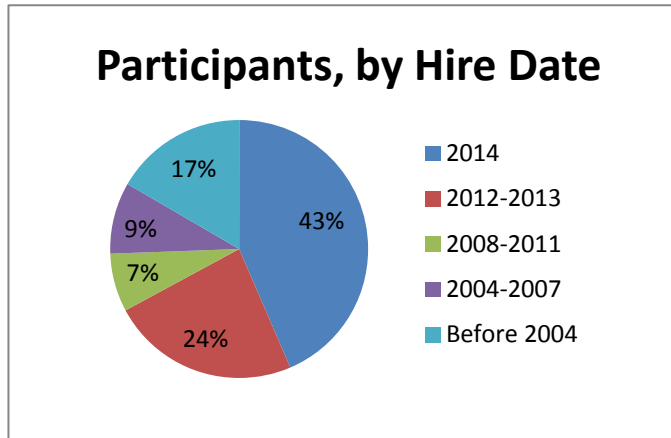
### Participant Information – Face-to-Face Courses

Over 300 probation officers (n=301) have completed a face-to-face course. Courses have been offered 46 times with a total of 971 participants for all courses.

Course participants have been diverse and representative of the population of probation officers we aim to serve, train, and educate. While many face-to-face participants are from large counties with populations over 200,000 (n=161, 53%), nearly half work in rural (n=64, 21%) or mid-sized (n=76, 25%) counties.



In the initial months of the program, participants from common pleas, municipal, and juvenile or family courts were almost evenly represented. (See June 2014 report.) However, the current trend is for almost half of participants to come from common pleas courts (n=166, 48%). This could be related to officers from common pleas courts being more likely to need Changing Offender Behavior (COB) credit or to a greater awareness of the courses among common pleas court staff.

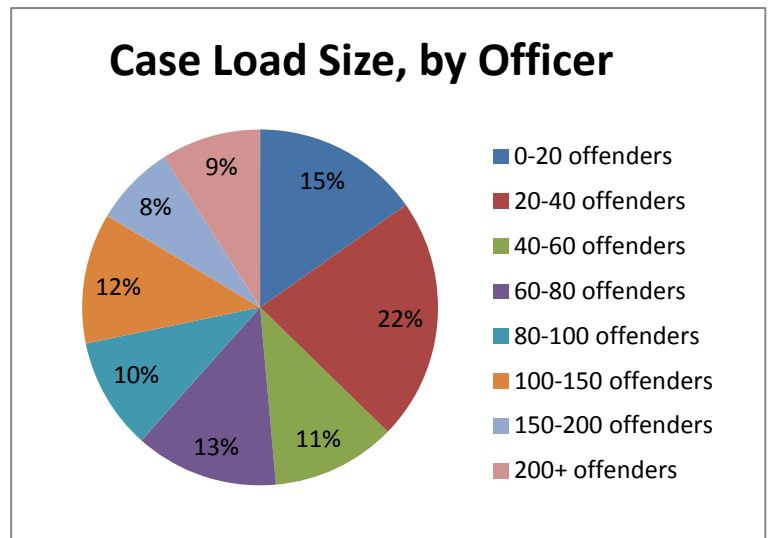


In addition, both seasoned and less experienced officers have participated in trainings. As expected, newer officers are more represented; however, about one-third of officers who have participated in training have three or more years of experience (n=99, 33%). Only 39% (n=117) of participants are adult probation officers hired in 2014 who are required to complete the training.

Some information is also available related to the types of cases probation officers are assigned and to their case load. Previously, this information was collected via an anonymous survey at the end of the course. It is now collected at registration and is associated with each participant. While this prevents counting a single participant multiple times, the data is limited to that from July to December courses, when the new process was implemented.

Case loads vary widely across departments, with about a third of probation officers reporting case loads of less than 40 (n=66, 37%), about a third reporting case loads more than 40 and less than 100 (n=61, 33%), and about a third reporting case loads greater than 100 (n=50, 29%).

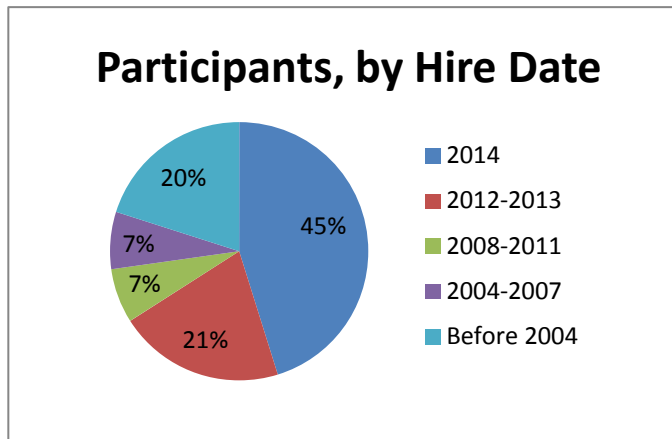
Case type also varies widely based on departments. Most probation officers surveyed have a general case load (n=102, 58%). A significant number also have specialized case loads (n=49, 28%) or intensive case loads (n=26, 15%). Of those with a specialized case load, the areas of speciality most highly represented were pre-sentence investigation (n=15), pre-trial (n=8), and substance abuse (n=8).



## Participant Information – Online Courses

Over 400 probation officers have completed an online course (n=430). Online course participants have some noticeable demographic differences compared to face-to-face course participants, including differences in experience, court type, and county size. Unfortunately complete demographic

information is not available for each participant. Data in this section include only those participants whose demographic information is available.



One of the notable differences between online and face-to-face course participants is that online course participants are more likely to be mandated to complete the training. Compared to face-to-face courses, 45% (n=144) of officers taking online courses are mandated to complete the training. Similar to face-to-face courses, the majority of participants (n=178, 55%) are not obligated to complete the training, which demonstrates that courses are viewed as beneficial, regardless of state mandates.

Nearly two-thirds of online course participants are from common pleas courts (n=228, 65%), and almost a quarter are from municipal courts (n=79, 23%). The remainder is employed by county courts or the Adult Parole Authority. Juvenile or family courts are not represented because those officers do not currently have access to the training in the Relias system. While the majority of participants are from large counties with populations over 200,000 (n=236, 60%), more than one-third work in rural (n=84, 21%) or mid-sized (n=73, 19%) counties.

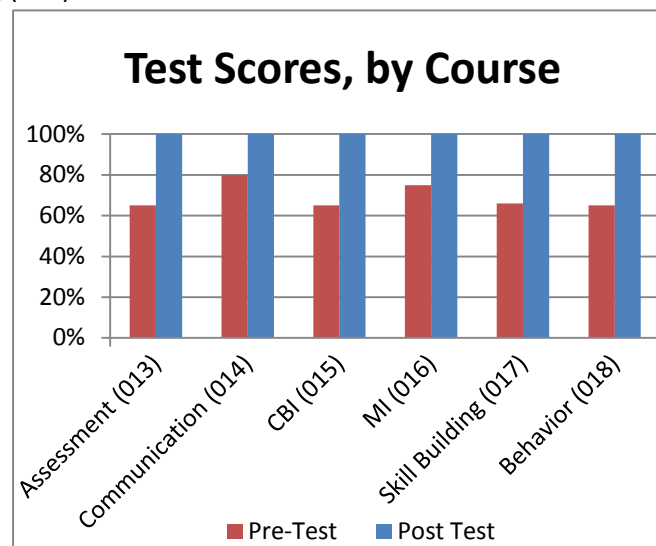
## Testing and Evaluation Results – Face-to-Face Courses

Face-to-face courses have received high marks and have been well-received by both new and more experienced officers. Face-to-face courses consist of the following:

- Introduction to Assessment and Case Planning (013)
- Professional Communication: Oral and Written Communication Skills (014)
- Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (015)
- Introduction to Motivational Interviewing (016)
- Introduction to Offender Skill Building (017)
- Introduction to Offender Behavior Management (018)

All courses, except Professional Communication, were developed with the University of Cincinnati. Professional Communication was developed with assistance from several consultants.

Each course begins with a pre-test that consists of 10 multiple choice questions. These same questions are given at the end of the course as a post-test. The average pre-test score for all courses has been 69% with no significant

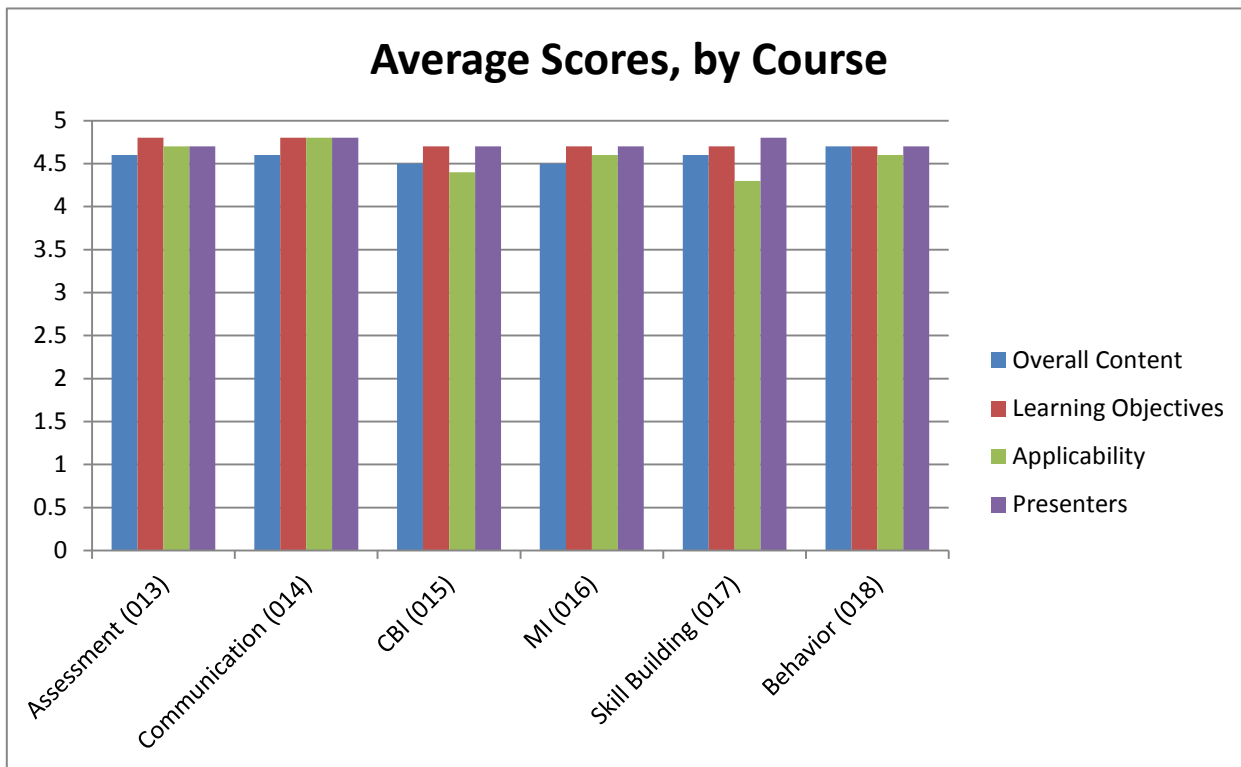


difference between participants based on court type, county size, or experience level. The average score on the post-test has been 100%, which provides a 30% average increase in test scores across all six courses. An individual did not pass the post-test initially 0.3% of the time (n=4). However, with remediation, each person was able to pass the test before leaving the course. There has been some variation in pre-test scores based on the course.

After completing the post-test, participants complete an evaluation that allows the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Data has been provided by 964 participants. Quantitative data is scored on a 5-point scale, and to date, responses have been extremely positive. In general, the rating for likelihood to apply course material has received the lowest score. A number of participants who do not supervise offenders have noted in their evaluations that the majority of course content is most relevant to supervising officers. This could be the cause of the slight difference in scores.

	Average for All Courses
What was the overall quality of the course?	4.6/5.0
Were the learning objectives for the course fulfilled?	4.7/5.0
How likely are you to apply what you learned at this course?	4.5/5.0
What was the overall quality of the presenters?	4.7/5.0

While there is some variation between courses, the scores have been high for each course with no significant difference between participants based on court type, county size, or experience level.



In addition to the quantitative data, probation officers are invited to share their comments on the course and describe how participating in it will impact their work as a probation officer. Below is a small sampling of some of their responses:

- The Probation Officer Training Program courses “are very informative and **aid in actual conversations with offenders.**” – Probation officer from an mid-sized municipal court with less than one year of experience
- “This course really helped me to **understand the concept of case planning.**” – Parole officer from ODRC with less than one year of experience
- After participating in this course, I will “work on the **4:1 ratio.**” – Probation officer from an urban municipal court with less than one year of experience
- After participating in this course, I will use “**more cognitive behavioral analysis** and more positive reinforcement of good thoughts.” – Probation officer from an urban common pleas with 2-4 years of experience
- After participating in this course, I will “understand that all defendants are different, and I will need to **use tactics that apply to each individual.**” – Probation officer from rural common pleas with 2-4 years of experience
- “**Great course! Content was excellent!**” – Probation officer from a rural municipal court with 5-9 years of experience
- After participating in this course, I will “**focus more on high risk issues** as opposed to everything.” – Probation officer from a rural juvenile court with more than 10 years of experience

## Evaluation Results – Online Courses

The online program consists of 12 courses that are offered through Relias and CE Quick. Courses were developed with several contracted agencies, including Franklin University, Stark State College, and the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA). Content was provided by the APPA, the University of Cincinnati, chief probation officers, and other subject matter experts. Online courses consist of the following offerings:

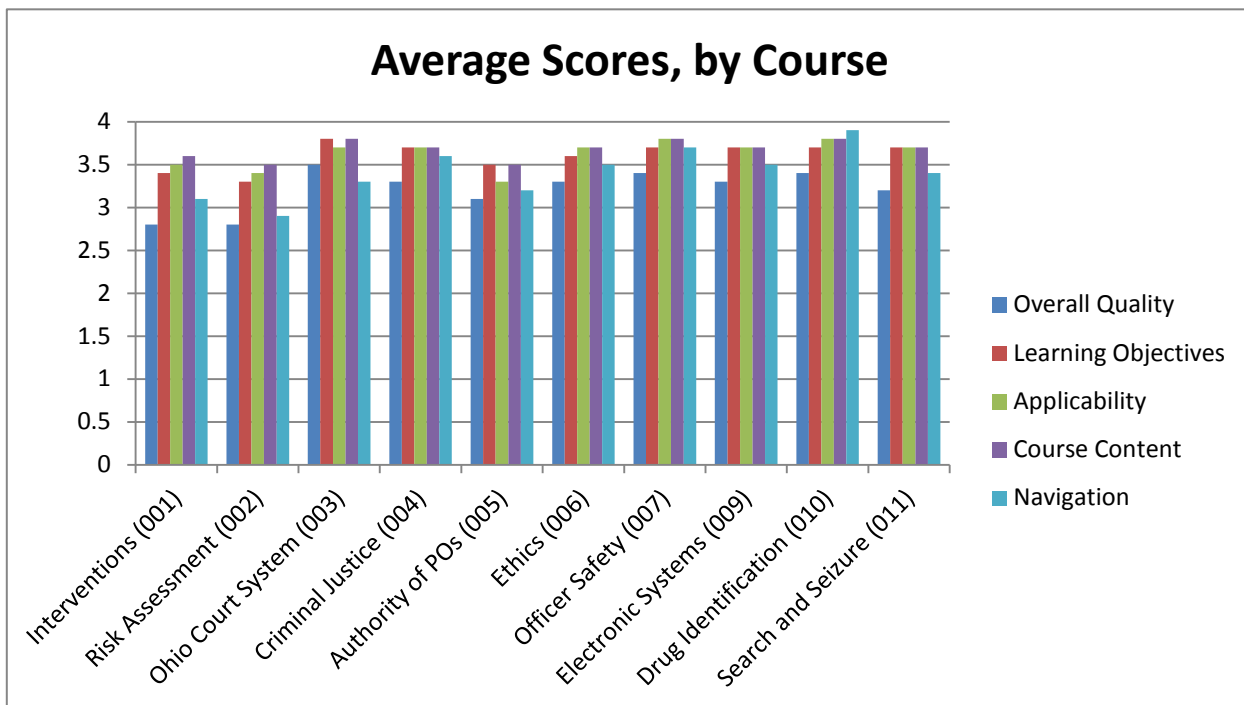
- The Principles of Effective Interventions (001)
- Risk Assessment Basics (002)
- The Ohio Court System (003)
- The Ohio Criminal Justice System and Its Partners (004)
- The Authority of Probation Officers and their Role within the Court (005)
- Probation Officer Ethics (006)
- The Basics of Officer Safety (007)
- Courtroom Presentation Basics (008)
- Electronic Offender Information Systems (009)
- Drug Identification and Testing (010)
- Search and Seizure for Probation (011)
- Special Populations (012) – Includes working with probationers with a history of mental illness, substance abuse, co-occurring disorders, sex offenses, and gang involvement

Courtroom Presentation Basics (008) and Special Populations (012) are currently courses created and owned by Relias. Courtroom Presentation Basics will be replaced by a course that the Supreme Court of Ohio is developing. A revised Special Populations will also be developed by June 30, 2015.

After completing each course, participants are invited to complete an evaluation that collects quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation for courses created by the Supreme Court of Ohio has been standardized. Evaluations for the two courses owned by Relias cannot be changed. The data for those courses will be presented afterward to prevent confusion. As with evaluations for face-to-face courses, evaluations are filled out after each course. Quantitative data is scored on a 4-point scale.

	Average for Courses
What was the overall quality of the course?	3.2/4.0
The course met the learning objectives.	3.6/4.0
I am likely to apply what I learned in this course.	3.6/4.0
Course content was current, up-to-date, and considered best practice.	3.7/4.0
Navigating the course was easy and user friendly.	3.4/4.0

Evaluation data has varied by course, with the first two courses continuing to receive, on average, lower scores. In addition, there has been a slight decrease in the average results for each course since the last review of evaluation data in June. This decrease has been modest, on average a decrease of 0.2 on the 4-point scale. Qualitative remarks indicated that the largest concerns are related to navigation and test questions that are considered confusing or misleading. In order to maintain high satisfaction, these issues will need to be addressed.



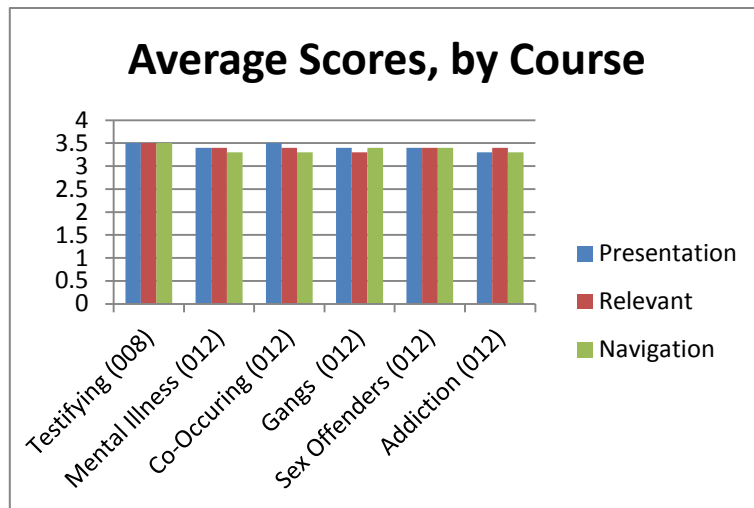
In addition to the quantitative data, probation officers are invited to share their comments on the course and describe how participating in it will impact their work as a probation officer. Below is a small sampling of some of their responses:

- **“I will stop applying the same strategies on low-risk offenders as I do with high-risk offenders.”**  
– Probation officer who completed The Principles of Effective Intervention (001)

- “I will be more aware of how I come across to my clients when meeting with them and try to be more conscious of my overall character when interacting with them. I will try to make sure I am **fulfilling all of the qualities of a good probation officer.**” – Probation officer who completed Authority of Probation Officers (005)
- After completing this course, I will “have a **greater understanding of the best practices in probation officer ethics** and know what to do if faced with co-workers that act unethically.” – Probation officer who completed Probation Officer Ethics (006)
- After completing this course, I will “be **more thorough and methodical** when conducting searches of an offender's person, vehicle, and home.” – Probation officer who completed Basics of Probation Officer Safety (011)

The six courses currently owned by Relias are also generally well-reviewed. They are scored slightly lower on average compared to the other online courses, but this variation is not significant and may be an artifact of the differences in questions.

	Average for Relias-Owned Courses
The course was presented clearly and organized.	3.4/4.0
Course content was relevant for my job.	3.4/4.0
Navigating the course was easy and user friendly.	3.4/4.0



Averages across courses are very consistent. Similar to the other online courses, these courses have also seen a slight decrease in evaluation scores since the last review of data. Again, this was a modest 0.1 decrease on a 4-point scale.

## Conclusions

In its first year, the Ohio Probation Officer Training Program has delivered significant results, with 581 officers trained and 3,198 courses completed. Courses have served a much broader audience than only new adult probation officers, and audiences have been diverse with respect to court type and county size. Despite the large scope of the program, evaluations are consistently high, and course statistics demonstrate the ongoing perceived value of the program.