

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL BULLETIN
ANNOUNCEMENT

Florida International University

University Graduate School

Doctoral Dissertation Defense: Predictors of Officer Self-Confidence in Police Interactions with
Disabled Individuals in Florida

Abstract

by

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There has been limited research conducted on disability-related training for law enforcement officers. Past researchers have either prioritized training specific to mental illness or evaluated the curriculum content rather than the training effectiveness. The present research focuses on predictors of officers' self-reported confidence in their ability to handle interactions with disabled individuals. The study took place in Florida and included 204 police officers. The findings from this quantitative study showed that, despite the common belief of minimum disability training provided to police officers, more than 71 of the 204 officers surveyed reported receiving some disability training in the police academy and after graduation. Even so, more than 56% of the officers indicated that their training focused only on mental illness and believed that more training would be beneficial to their careers. Finally, the study found that officers with personal and on-duty experiences with disabled persons had higher confidence levels in their ability to handle the study's hypothesized scenarios than those without such experiences. This finding suggests that experiential learning could be a valuable addition to formal education for law enforcement officers. Policy implications for law enforcement training are discussed.

Date: June 30, 2021

Department: Criminology and Criminal Justice

Time: 11:00 am

Major Professor: Dr. Robert Peacock

Place: <https://fiu.zoom.us/j/2604443700>