

Comment from JONES LARRY

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As the education agenda and states move more to basing EMS programs in institutions of higher education quality instructors are becoming a problem. Colleges are looking for instructors with degrees not instructors with a good knowledge of EMS standards and current practices. In working for colleges and having both a bachelor's degree and over 40 years EMS experience I have seen instructors hired because they had a degree even though they had minimal EMS experience. I have sat in classes with instructors who skipped over material or provided poor responses to questions rather than admit what they didn't know. Our current community college has a program director teaching that hasn't worked in EMS for over 10 years and didn't know tourniquets were an accepted bleeding control device. Placing the priority on degree over experience is promoting what I call inbreed training hurting our students and causing EMS services to spend time and money retraining. As the current clinical education director for the local service, we have had to provide many classes for current students and graduates to understand current standards. While affiliating with colleges does offer the opportunity for receive credits toward degrees I am also seeing even when the school has a EMS program the admissions process does not understand the EMS program. I have several current employees who have tried to register to complete degrees, in one case the operations manager who has been a paramedic for 8 years was asked to retake her paramedic classes because it was past their time period, in another case a shift captain who had been a paramedic for 10 years was asked to produce his EMT card to prove he had completed the course. As I live in a very rural state with few colleges this also produces a hardship for smaller more rural services in trying to provide advanced services. While I agree with many of the standards, trying to teach to a more consistent standard we need to look past the degree which is the focus of many colleges and look at the quality of the instructor.