

Module 7
Classification

DISRUPTIVE GROUPS

7.1.0 Unit Goal: Summarize issues involving security threat groups.

7.1.1 Define security threat groups.

- A. Penal Code, Sec. 71.01 (d) Definitions
 - 1. Criminal street gang
- B. A security threat group is any group that meets the definition of a criminal street gang as defined by the Texas Penal Code §71.01.

7.1.2 List criteria for confirming criminal street gang membership.

- A. Submission Criteria – Code of Criminal Procedure, Sec. 67.054

7.1.3 List warning signs of gang activity.

- A. Inmate on inmate assaults
- B. Inmates assaulting staff members
- C. Request for housing assignment changes
- D. Self-mutilations
- E. Body tattoos
- F. Gang-related apparel
- G. Inmate graffiti
- H. Inmate groupings at feeding, at recreation, and in housing
- I. Information from informants
- J. Information from law enforcement agencies

7.1.4 Identify various criminal street gangs.

- A. Texas Syndicate
 - 1. Predominantly Mexican male; some white
 - 2. Para-military in structure
- B. Aryan Brotherhood of Texas
 - 1. Exclusively for white inmates
 - 2. White supremacist philosophy
 - 3. Has an executive committee composed of five steering committee members
- C. Mexicanemi - Texas Mexican Mafia (Note: Mexicanemi = California Mexican Mafia)
 - 1. Exclusively for Hispanic inmates
 - 2. Members are primarily from the Houston, San Antonio, and El Paso areas
 - 3. Para-military in structure

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D. Barrio Azteca

1. Started in the Coffield Unit of TDCJ by five gang members of the "X14" group from El Paso
2. Paramilitary in structure

E. Crips

1. Identify with the color blue
2. Uses the letter "C" to replace the letter "B" in conversations and writings.
3. Gang members will write blue graffiti on walls in the neighborhood to mark their particular territorial boundaries

F. Bloods - This gang is also referred to as the "Pirus" because they originated on Piru Street. The "Bloods" developed in an effort to protect themselves from the "Crips" and have become the principal rival of the "Crips."

1. Identify with the color red
2. Use the term "Blood" to identify one another
3. Graffiti writings are done in red

G. Tango Cliques

1. The word "Tango" is slang for "Hometown"
2. The differences between "Tango" Cliques and established prison gangs:
 - a. Lacks a central leadership
 - b. Limited criminal justice experience
 - c. Are high profile
 - d. Not recognized by TDCJ as an organized group and are housed in general population
 - e. Once they leave TDCJ, there's no binding tie with the clique
3. "Tango Blast" is the coalition of Tango Cliques
4. "Tango" Cliques include:
 - a. Houston
 - b. Dallas
 - c. Austin
 - d. Ft. Worth
 - e. West Texas
 - f. Rio Grande Valley

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- g. San Antonio
- h. El Paso
- i. Corpus Christi

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Add any additional gangs you have in your jurisdiction(s) and refer to the Appendix for an example of a confirmation sheet.

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CLASSIFICATION

7.2.0 Unit Goal: Summarize the process of classifying inmates.

7.2.1 Define objective classifications.

- A. Objective classification – a formal process for separating and managing inmates. The process relies on trained classification staff, use of reliable and valid data, and conducting process assessment and outcome evaluation.

7.2.2 Factors that shall be considered in classification.

- A. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.1 (a) – Objective Classification Plan

7.2.3 Describe approved classification instruments.

- A. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.1 (b) & (c) – Objective Classification Plan

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Provide examples of a Needs Assessment Instrument. Refer to the Appendix for examples.

7.2.4 Define the three custody levels.

- A. Maximum Custody Level (High and Close Custody – Levels 1-2)
 - 1. Criteria
 - a. Usually confined for serious offenses of violence
 - b. Possess an extensive level of criminal sophistication
 - c. May or may not have demonstrated a propensity for violence in an institutional setting.
 - 2. Such inmates require close supervision and maximum security.
- B. Medium Custody Level (Medium Assaultive and Escape, Medium and Medium Pre-Sentenced – Levels 3-5)
 - 1. Criteria
 - a. Usually confined for felony offenses
 - b. Possess a moderate level of criminal sophistication
 - c. Have not demonstrated a propensity for violence in an institutional setting.
 - 2. Such inmates require moderate supervision, may participate in certain work and program activities, and qualify for medium security.
- C. Minimum Custody Level (Minimum, Low Minimum and Very Low Minimum – Levels 6-9)
 - 1. Criteria
 - a. Usually confined for lesser offenses
 - b. Possess a lower level of criminal sophistication
 - c. Have not demonstrated a propensity for violence in an institutional setting or a disregard for the institutional rules and regulations.

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2. Such inmates require less supervision, may participate in work and program activities, and qualify for minimum security.

7.2.5 List advantages for using an Objective Jail Classification System.

- A. Advantages of an Objective Jail Classification System include:
 1. Less costly jail construction, by placing inmates in less restrictive housing units based on their custody levels.
 2. Redistribution of personnel according to the custody requirements of inmates, which permits better daily administration and crisis management.
 3. Inmate specific data generated by the classification system can be used for:
 - a. Ongoing management
 - b. Planning
 - c. Policy development
 4. Improved security and control of inmates.
 5. Provides information for monitoring and evaluating program goals and personnel needs.
 6. Assists in population management by identifying groups of inmates who may be eligible for various release programs.
 7. Establishes an orderly method for assessing the varied needs and requirements of each inmate from a commitment to release.
 8. Helps to improve the level of safety for staff and inmates.
 9. Decrease in agency liability:
 - a. Proactive approach
 - b. Minimize inmate victimization
 - c. Decrease in staff assaults
 - d. Minimize biases and prejudice

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Refer to the Appendix for point additive scale and decision tree.

7.2.6 Identify key components of an Objective Jail Classification System.

- A. Point Additive Reassessment form – A classification instrument that uses reliable and valid criteria.
 1. See Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule TCJS 271.1 (b) & (c) – Objective Classification Plan
 2. Form: <https://www.tcjs.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/PointAdditiveReassessment.pdf>
- B. Appropriate use of overrides

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INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Define “overrides” and refer to the Appendix for override form.

1. Example:
 - a. If it is determined that circumstances require a deviation from the Reclassification Decision Tree, resulting in a security designation that is other than what would routinely occur by following the tree, it is designated an override. If you find it necessary to override the reclassification tree, complete the tree through the normal procedure, then circle the appropriate override custody level (on the manual form) and note your reason in the designated area.
- C. Sufficient staff trained and dedicated to classification functions with 4 hours minimum required by standards.
 1. See Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.3 – Training
- D. A housing plan consistent with the classification needs, physical plant design, and security requirements.
- E. Periodic formal evaluations of the OJC system
 1. See Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.7 – Audit

7.2.7 Identify the two approved jail classification methods.

- A. Two dominant approaches in objective classification systems are:
 1. Decision tree - The decision tree assigns inmates to categories that are clearly defined by splits on the tree. There is high precision and clarity in the meaning of each category.
 2. Point additive scale - The point additive scale produces categories by assigning points to various established criteria.

7.2.8 Identify a composite of information useful for classifying an inmate.

- A. Classification of an inmate is derived from a composite of information obtained from:
 1. Observing the inmate
 2. Booking forms
 3. Inmate medical record
 4. Delivering officer and/or arrest report
 5. Inmate’s prior arrest files
 6. TCIC/NCIC network information
 7. Interviewing the inmate
 8. Risk factors observed

7.2.9 Identify risk factors which may impact housing.

- A. Risk factors which may impact housing include:
 1. Suicidal/self-harm risk
 2. Intellectually and developmentally disabled
 3. Physical impairments and limitations
 4. Protective custody
 5. Escape threat

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6. Assaultive
7. Withdrawal concerns
8. Medical
9. Known gang affiliation
10. Known management problem
11. Juvenile certified as an adult
12. Predatory inmates/inmates vulnerable to victimization

7.2.10 Identify methods for assigning inmates to cell according to classification.

- A. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.2 – Housing Scheme
 1. Refer to departmental classification plan and housing scheme as approved by Texas Commission on Jail Standards.
- B. Assign inmate to housing:
 1. Pod/Dorm
 2. Cell
 3. Bunk
- C. Note assignment on inmate's record.
- D. Refer to departmental policy for additional responsibilities.

7.2.11 List methods for reviewing a master roster of inmates during cell assignments.

- A. Departmental policy should indicate how to use the master roster for this purpose.
- B. Review and update master roster daily.

7.2.12 Define requirements regarding reclassification.

- A. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.1(b)(3) requires that an inmate's classification be reviewed every 30-90 days.
- B. Factors that would require reclassification of an inmate
 1. Immediately upon disciplinary convictions.
 2. Immediately upon a change in legal status which would affect classification (sentenced, new charges, charges dismissed while in custody, etc.).
 3. Within a minimum of 30 days from initial placement in administrative separation and every 30 days after for continuation of status until rehoused to general population.

7.2.13 Identify reasons for updating inmate records.

- A. Reasons for updating inmate records include:
 1. Possible reclassification
 2. Bonding purposes
 3. Health purposes
 4. Release purposes

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5. Out of County/State/Agency holds
6. For exchanges of conduct information between other officers and facilities
7. Complete record forwarded to TDCJ

7.2.14 Define trustee.

- A. Trustee - a person who, because of good conduct, is given some measure of freedom in and around the prison or jail.

7.2.15 Identify methods of determining the eligibility of an inmate for a trustee assignment.

- A. Classification
- B. Behavior while in confinement
- C. Type of work to be performed
- D. Interview of inmate

7.2.16 Identify legal requirements regarding work assignments.

- A. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 289.2 – Voluntary Work
 1. Work assignments must be voluntary for pretrial detainees and inmates sentenced to TDCJ-ID.
 2. Inmates can be required to keep their living areas clean.
- B. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 289.3 – Maximum Hours
- C. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 42.10 – Satisfaction of Judgment as in Misdemeanor Convictions
- D. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 43.09 (a) – Fine Discharged
 1. A defendant who performs labor under this article during a day in which he is confined is entitled to both the credit for confinement and the credit for labor provided by this article.
- E. Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 43.101 – Voluntary Work

7.2.17 Define child.

- A. Family Code Sec. 51.02 (2) – Definitions: Child
- B. Texas Commission on Jail Standards Rule 271.1 (e) – Objective Classification Plan

7.2.18 Define procedures used when encountering a suspected juvenile.

- A. Separate inmate from all other inmates until proper age can be determined and notify supervisor.
- B. Conduct a two-finger look up through AFIS.

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- C. If no identification through AFIS is returned, conduct the following steps:
 - 1. Examine identification.
 - 2. Interview inmate by asking their date of birth and comparing age given.
 - 3. Contact juvenile officer/department for possible verification of age.
 - 4. Contact school district/campus resource officer.
- D. If determined the individual is a juvenile, ensure any and all documents are expunged and/or discarded.

APPENDIX A

Instructor Note: Use current TCJS Classification forms for classification exercises. All forms can be located at: <https://www.tcjs.state.tx.us/forms/>

- A. Offense Severity Scale
- B. Point Additive
- C. Decision Tree

APPENDIX B

Scenario Recommendations for Case Studies: The instructor will organize each group into a minimum of 3 students per group.

- One student will role play the officer conducting the classification interview.
- One student will role play the inmate.
- Remaining student(s) will be an observer noting risk factors to be utilized during classification.
- Instructor will have students conduct initial classifications and reassessments utilizing point additive, decision tree, and appropriate reassessment forms.
- Students will rotate roles in which they participate.

Case Study 1:

Subject: 35 year old W/M

Current Charge: Aggravated Assault w/ Deadly Weapon
Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

Priors: Unlawful Carrying Weapon (Convicted one year ago)
Misdemeanor Terroristic Threats (Deferred Adjudication two years ago)
Public Lewdness (Convicted seven years ago)

Disciplinary History: None

Detainer/Warrant: Yes (USMS)

Community Ties/Employment: Lived and worked in area for 5 yrs.

Inmate Behaviors: Defiant, disinterested in the process, disrespectful

Inmate Appearance: White muscle shirt, 3 leaf clover tattoo on left forearm, lightning bolt tattoos on chest, "Doc Martin" boots with red laces.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Reassessment)

Case Study 1A: Reassessment

- Routine 30 to 90 day reassessment
- No disciplinary
- No behavioral problems
- Positive Attitude

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Next Reassessment Example)

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Case Study 1B: Reassessment

The Sheriff called and wants the inmate to be made an outside working inmate. He has known the family a long time. Can you override?

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree)

Case Study 2:

Subject: 44 year old B/M

Current Charge: Theft of Service

Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance PG1

Priors: Misdemeanor Possession of CS (Convicted one year ago)

Manufacturing/Del of CS PG (all amounts) (Convicted two years ago)

Delivery of Marijuana < ¼ oz. Drug Free Zone (Convicted four years ago)

Disciplinary History: Yes-Hindering Jail Operation/Fighting

Detainer/Warrant: No

Community Ties/Employment: Lived and worked in area for 2 months.

Inmate Behaviors: Lethargic, slurred speech, poor memory, scratching arms

Inmate Appearance: dilated pupils, dirty clothing, sweating profusely

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Reassessment)

Case Study 2A: Reassessment

You receive a TTY from another county advising to place a hold for involuntary manslaughter.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Next Reassessment Example)

Case Study 2B: Reassessment

Inmate is scheduled for a routine reassessment. There are no additional disciplinary incidents or change in legal status

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree)

Case Study 3:

Subject: 42 year old H/M

Current Charge: Robbery

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Priors: Aggravated Assault on a Peace Officer (Convicted 3 years ago)

Disciplinary History: None

Detainer/Warrant: Yes (ICE)

Community Ties/Employment: Lived and worked in area for 10 yrs.

Inmate Behaviors: Compliant with process, quiet, limited English

Inmate Appearance: clean shaven, well groomed

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Reassessment)

Case Study 3A: Reassessment

Indictment was received on current charge. Inmate was indicted for felony theft. ICE has dropped their detainer.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Next Reassessment Example)

Case Study 3B: Reassessment

Inmate was placed on Administrative Separation pending the decision from the Disciplinary Board for violating the facility rules. Violations are for fighting and disrespect to staff.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree)

Case Study 4:

Subject: 38 year old W/F

Current Charge: Trafficking a Person

Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle

Priors: Felony Unlawful Carrying Weapon (Convicted 3 years ago)

Escaped from Texas Youth Commission

Disciplinary History: None

Detainer/Warrant: None

Community Ties/Employment: Not from the area.

Inmate Behaviors: Depressed, holding back tears, failing to make eye contact, arms crossed, withdrawn

Inmate Appearance: Numerous razor blade scars on both inner arms, disheveled hair, smeared make up

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(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Reassessment)

Case Study 4A: Reassessment

Received information from TYC that the “escape” charge was incorrectly reported to DPS and it was actually a walk away

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Next Reassessment Example)

Case Study 4B: Reassessment

Received disciplinary conviction for assault on staff. No criminal charges were filed.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree)

Case Study 5:

Subject: 24 A/M

Current Charge: Prostitution
 Solicitation of a minor

Priors: None

Disciplinary History: Yes- Sexual Activity

Detainer/Warrant: None

Community Ties/Employment: Yes - Educator

Inmate Behavior: Flamboyant, Effeminate, Animated

Inmate Appearance: Long hair, no facial or body hair, manicured nails, wearing leggings and heels

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Reassessment)

Case Study 5A: Reassessment

Received detainer from New Mexico for Aggravated Sexual Assault of a Child.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree) (Next Reassessment Example)

Case Study 5B: Reassessment

Inmate claimed to be the victim of sexual assault in the facility.

(Point Additive) (Decision Tree)