

## Changes in Student Definition of De-Escalation in Professional Peace Officer Education

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**Abstract :** Since the release of the 21<sup>st</sup> century policing report in the United States, the techniques of de-escalation have received a lot of attention and focus in political systems, policy changes, and the media. The challenge in professional peace officer education is that there is a vast range of defining de-escalation and understanding the various techniques involved, many of which are based on popular media. This research surveyed professional peace officer education university students on their definition of de-escalation and the techniques associated with de-escalation before specific communications coursework was completed. The students were then surveyed after the communication coursework was completed to determine the changes in defining and understanding de-escalation techniques. This research has found that clearly defining de-escalation and emphasizing the broad range of techniques available enhances the students' understanding and application of proper de-escalation. This research demonstrates the need for professional peace officer education to move students from media concepts of law enforcement to theoretical concepts.

**Keywords :** criminal justice education, communication theory, de-escalation, peace officer communication

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