

NJLEND Policy and Advocacy Curriculum: Building the Next Generation of Leaders in Disability Policy

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Introduction

NJLEND's Policy & Advocacy curriculum prepares trainees to become effective advocates on behalf of, and in partnership with, the children and families they serve. Didactic seminars, experiential learning opportunities, and engagement with local policy makers, enables the NJLEND fellows to develop the knowledge and skills to become future leaders in disability policy.

Policy and Advocacy Curricular Elements

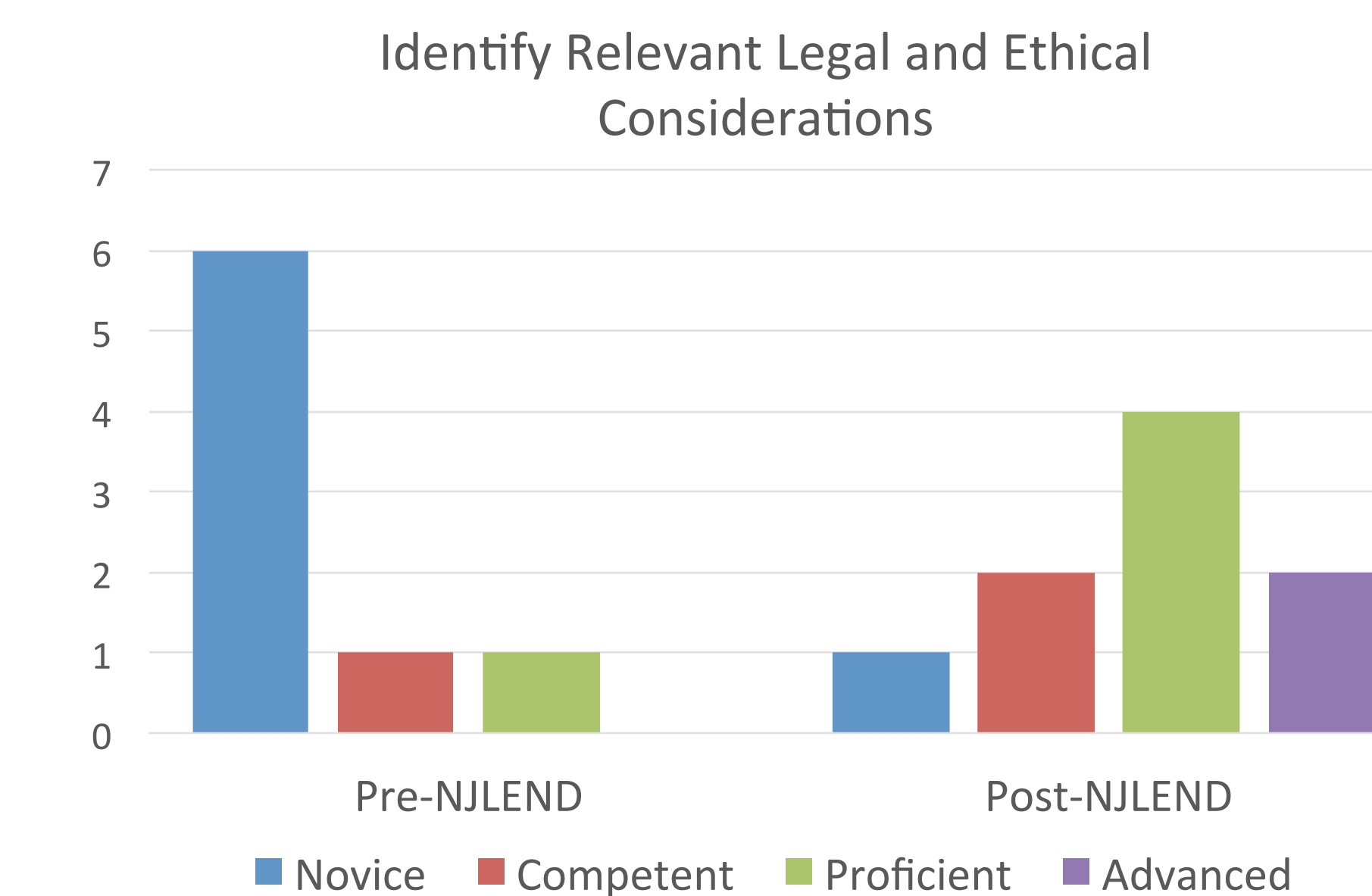
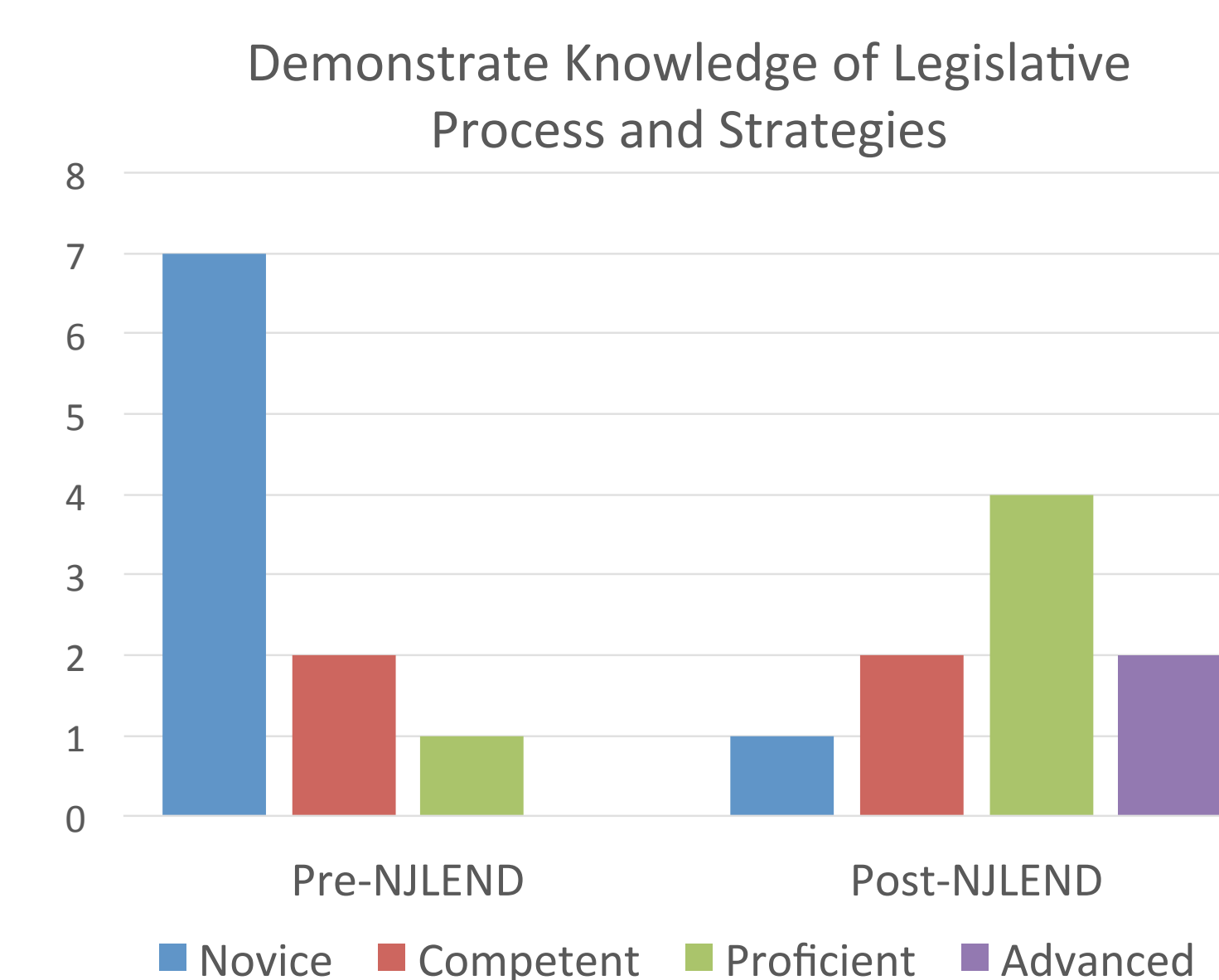
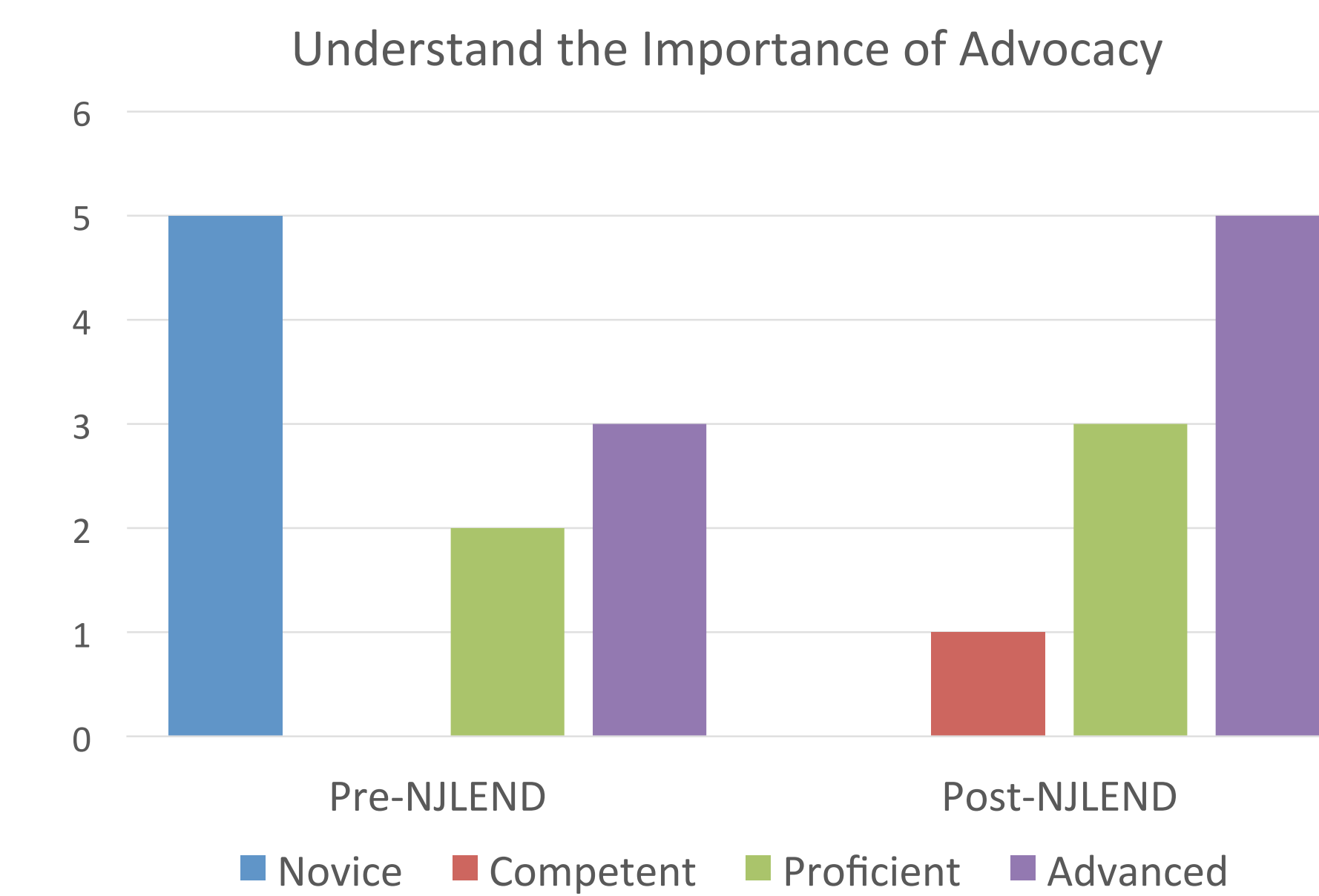
- Policy and Advocacy Related Didactic Seminars
 - Self-Advocacy and Family Participation in Policy Making
 - Legislation (Title V, Title X, Title XIX, Title XXI)
 - IDEA and Overview of Early Childhood Systems
 - Disability Policy (Affordable Care Act, Medicaid)
 - The Federal and State Legislative Processes
 - The Intersection between Clinical Practice, Research, and Policy
- Eagleton Institute on Politics: Science and Politics Workshop
 - Thwarting Polarization While Communicating the Science of Zika and Zika Prevention
- Case Studies
 - Review of the NJ Title V Block Grant
- Disability Policy Seminar

Policy and Advocacy Assessment

At the beginning and end of NJLEND, fellows complete three self-assessments. As part of one of these, the NJLEND Competency Self-Assessment, fellows answer the following questions:

Policy and Advocacy Competency Assessment	Level of Competency			
	Novice	Compete	Proficient	Advanced
COMPETENCY AREA: POLICY & ADVOCACY				
1. Understand the importance of advocacy, on behalf of and by individuals with ASD and other disabilities and their families				
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative process and key disability-related legislation, as well as appropriate strategies for clinicians to inform policy				
3. Identify relevant legal and ethical considerations in providing care to children and youth with ASD and other complex neurodevelopmental disabilities				

Policy and Advocacy Assessment Results – Pre and Post NJLEND



Interactions with Local and State Policy Makers

The 2016-2017 NJLEND fellows utilized the knowledge gained through LEND to speak to policymakers about how policy impacts the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families.

- Capitol Hill Visit – Disability Policy Seminar
 - Rep. Frank Pallone (D)
 - Rep. Chris Smith (R)
 - Sen. Cory Booker (D)
 - Rep. Leonard Lance (R)
- Roundtable Discussion
 - Sen. Robert Menendez (D)



Impact

- Enables trainees to gain an understanding of the legislative process in the areas of policymaking, policy interpretation, and advocacy for individuals with disabilities and their families.
- Provides trainees with the confidence, communication skills, and policy knowledge to advocate on behalf of individuals with disabilities.
- Fosters civic engagement and allows trainees to engage in policy discussions, meetings, and hearings that will benefit their leadership trajectories as emerging professionals in health and allied health fields.