



ILLINOIS COALITION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON: FACT SHEET

About IL-CHEP

The Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison (IL-CHEP) is a coalition of educators, students, activists, universities, and others committed to bringing quality higher education to Illinois prisons and jails and working toward a safer, more just society. Founded in 2016, we operate with the knowledge that higher education programs are among the best ways to offer opportunities and hope to individuals who are incarcerated. Such programs also help all of us imagine alternatives to our current system of mass incarceration.

IL-CHEP Priorities and Goals

- 1) **Support programs and instructors** that offer higher education to individuals in Illinois prisons and jails. Ensure that this education is of high quality and that it is delivered in an efficient, sound, and just manner.
- 2) **Educate the public** about the value of higher education within prisons and jails.
- 3) **Advocate for the expansion** of higher education in Illinois prisons and support universities and community groups that seek to start prison higher education programs.
- 4) **Assist legislators** to create policy around prison higher education that will benefit all of Illinois.
- 5) **Encourage and engage in research** on higher education and incarceration. Disseminate information about higher education in prison in Illinois.
- 6) Work with IDOC and other entities to **create consistent rules** regarding the administration of higher education in Illinois jails and prisons.
- 7) Focus on higher education as a significant **path toward re-entry** for the thousands of individuals released from prison each year. As part of this goal, advocate for IDOC policies that support professional and supportive engagement between programs and students following release.

What Research Shows

- 1) A 2013 RAND report reviewed 50 studies and 32 years of research on education-in-prison Programs. It found lower rates of recidivism among individuals who received prison education than among incarcerated individuals who did not.ⁱ The report cited the following:
 - prison education reduces re-incarceration rates by 13.8 %;
 - prison education that engages college professors, uses whole class instruction, and has post-release components produces the most significant results;
 - incarcerated individuals who participate in prison education are 13% more likely to gain employment than individuals who have not participated.

- 2) According to a comprehensive survey of all 50 states from the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), education in prison promotes better communication between incarcerated individuals and correctional staff and better race relations in prison.ⁱⁱ
- 3) The IHEP report also recognizes that the education of adults who are incarcerated helps them be strong role models for their children, some of whom may enter the system if cycles of poverty are not broken.ⁱⁱⁱ

Finally, higher education programs in prison are bi-partisan. What makes them attractive to both red and blue states is that they **work**; they save money for the state, reduce prison numbers, and help people reach their full economic and human potential.

Programs in Illinois Offering Higher Education in Prison as of April 2019

Host Institution	Name of Program	Facility
Benedictine University	n/a	Stateville
Danville Area Community College	n/a	Danville
DePaul University	DePaul University Inside-out Program	Stateville
Kaskaskia Community College	n/a	Centralia
Lake Land Community College	n/a	23 facilities
Loyola University	n/a	Stateville
Northeastern University	Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project	Stateville
North Park University	n/a	Stateville
Northwestern University	Northwestern Prison Education Program	Stateville
University of Illinois	Education Justice Project	Danville

Contact:
www.ilchep.org

ⁱ http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9728/index1.html

ⁱⁱ <http://www.ihep.org/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/pubs/learningreducerecidivism.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.ihep.org/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/pubs/learningreducerecidivism.pdf>