

# PRISON EDUCATION PROJECT INFO SHEET

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Washington University Prison Education Project (PEP) is a competitive liberal arts degree program offered at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center in Pacific, MO, available to incarcerated students and prison staff. Our aim is to bring Washington University's intellectual rigor and educational standards to our students in the prison. We offer semester-long college courses, short-term workshops and individual tutoring for incarcerated and staff students. PEP is a fully accredited program, currently granting the Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts from the University College at Washington University in St. Louis. We also hope to reach incarcerated individuals at MECC who are not PEP students by offering reading groups, lectures, and other intellectual opportunities to enhance their quality of life and encourage them to continue their education, through PEP or elsewhere.

## HISTORY

The Washington University Prison Education Project was established when a group of faculty, who were interested in teaching college courses in prison, began meeting in 2011. In 2014, they secured funding from the Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison and began teaching for-credit, college-level classes at the Missouri Eastern Correctional Center (MECC) in Pacific, Missouri. In addition to offering courses for incarcerated students, PEP also offers courses for correctional staff. In 2015, the Office of the Provost at Washington University also provided funding for PEP. At this time, incarcerated students can earn an Associates of Arts degree, and the accreditation for a Bachelors in Science degree is currently in progress. PEP has the distinction of being, as of fall 2016, the only program of its kind that is fully funded by the university.

## LANGUAGE

PEP encourages everyone to think carefully about the language we use to refer to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. Eddie Ellis offers this advice:

"In an effort to assist our transition from prison to our communities as responsible citizens and to create a more positive human image of ourselves, we are asking everyone to stop using these negative terms and to simply refer to us as PEOPLE. People currently or formerly incarcerated, PEOPLE on parole, PEOPLE recently released from prison, PEOPLE in prison, PEOPLE with criminal convictions, but PEOPLE.

1. Be conscious of the language you use. Remember that each time you speak, you convey powerful... images.
2. Stop using the terms offender, felon, prisoner, inmate and convict.
3. Substitute the words PEOPLE and RETURNING CITIZENS for these other negative terms.
4. Encourage your friends, family and colleagues to use positive language in their speech, writing, publications and electronic communications."

*(Excerpt from Language by Eddie Ellis, Prison Studies Project, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/language/>)*

## 2018-2019 COURSE OFFERINGS

Between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Freedom, Dr. Lerone Martin  
Calculus I, Dr. Nikhil Gupta  
Citizen Scholar: The Civic Role of the Academic Writer  
Dr. Victoria Thomas  
Greek Mythology, Dr. Grizelda McClelland  
Chinese Civilization, Dr. Robert Hegel  
Introduction to Literature, Dr. Barbara Baumgartner  
Introduction to Macroeconomics, Dr. Dorothy Petersen

Introductory Psychological Statistics, Lindsay Michalski  
International Politics, Dr. Michael Bechtel  
Issues in Applied Ethics, Dr. Julia Driver  
Japanese Civilization, Dr. Rebecca Copeland  
Order and Change in Society, Dr. David Cunningham  
Pre-Calculus, Dr. Lindsey Lisalda  
Ethnography: Research, Methods, and Beyond, Chelsey Carter  
Religion and American Society, Dr. Aaron Griffith  
Topics in Language and Thinking: Modernism, Anna Preus

