



EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT  
an initiative of Education at Illinois

## Higher Education Programs in Illinois Correctional Centers

*Designed by Sidney Rodriguez*

# 2022 Directory

# Introduction

This directory lists existing higher education in prison (HEP) programs in Illinois and illustrates the need for additional programs in the state. For purposes of this document, HEP refers to any program providing academic post-secondary instruction to incarcerated students, whether or not it provides transferable credits or leads to a degree.

Ten years ago, only five HEP programs existed in Illinois and a small minority of the state's then-nearly 49,000 people incarcerated in Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) facilities had access to college-level educational offerings.

Much has changed in the intervening decade. As of April 2022, 13 HEP programs offer post-secondary academic courses to incarcerated students at eight different IDOC facilities. Their curricula range widely – from one that puts on annual Shakespeare performances to another that offers a master's degree in Christian ministry and restorative arts to another that offers workshops in fine arts such as printmaking. This directory includes maps, lists of prisons where HEP is and is not available, and detailed information on each HEP program in Illinois.

Following the HEP program guide, we include a list of Illinois community colleges that provide career and technical education (CTE) and vocational skills programs to incarcerated students. These colleges are under contract with the Department of Corrections and operate separately from HEP programs. For more information about these offerings, contact Janelle Washington, Illinois Community College Board Director for CTE, at [Janelle.Washington@illinois.gov](mailto:Janelle.Washington@illinois.gov)

The recent growth in HEP programs has been encouraging, but the work is not yet done. Twenty IDOC prisons still have no HEP offerings. This means that, of the more than 28,000 people currently incarcerated in IDOC facilities, the majority still do not have the option to pursue academic higher education.

We hope this report will inspire faculty members, graduate students, and administrators at institutions not yet involved with prison higher education to reach out and offer academic courses at nearby facilities. Undergraduate students can also play a role by advocating for such opportunities and participating, whether as students or interns, in their campus' programs.

\*If any of the information listed is inaccurate, or if you know of any other programs that are not listed, please email [info@educationjustice.net](mailto:info@educationjustice.net). Any updates will be included in the 2023 edition of this directory.

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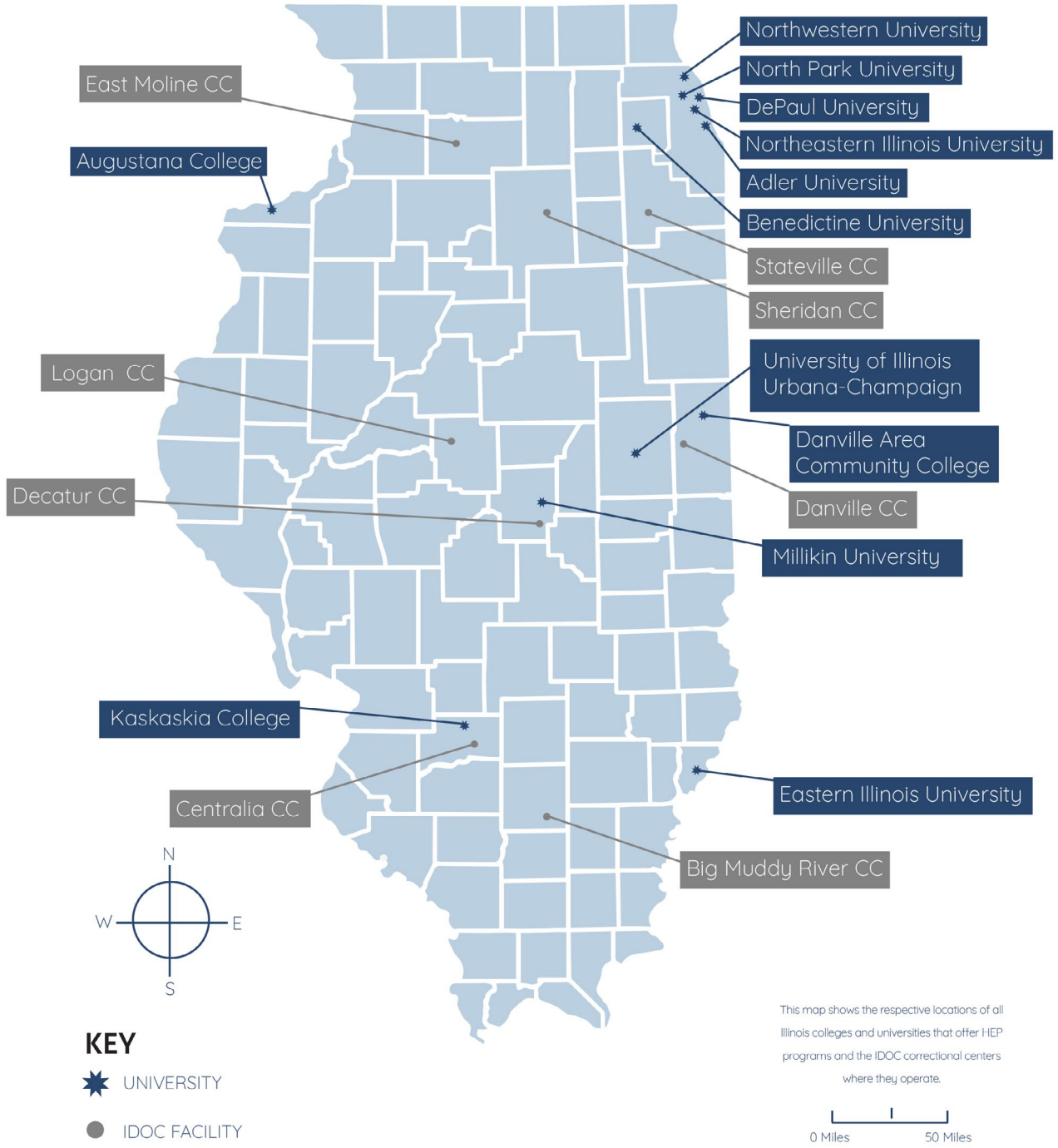
## Higher Education Programs in Illinois Correctional Centers

There are currently 13 higher education programs in Illinois correctional centers. Twelve of these programs are provided by Illinois colleges and universities and one is run by an organization that brings together faculty from several institutions of higher education. Together, they offer academic higher education at eight of the 28 IDOC correctional centers.

Big Muddy Correctional Center	Adler University: Bachelor's Completion Program
Centralia Correctional Center	Kaskaskia College
Danville Correctional Center	Danville Area Community College, Eastern Illinois University, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign: Education Justice Project
Decatur Correctional Center	Millikin University: Shakespeare Corrected
East Moline Correctional Center	Augustana College: Augustana Prison Education Program
Logan Correctional Center	North Park University: School of Restorative Arts, Northwestern University: Northwestern Prison Education Program
Sheridan Correctional Center	Benedictine University: Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program
Stateville Correctional Center	DePaul University: Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, North Park University: School of Restorative Arts, Northeastern Illinois University: University Without Walls, Northwestern University: Northwestern Prison Education Program, Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project

Continue to the Program Guide for a detailed look at each program's mission, features, contact information, and more.

## Map of Higher Education in Prison in Illinois



## Adler University: Bachelor's Completion Program

<b>College/University</b>	Adler University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Big Muddy River Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2021
<b>Contact Info</b>	Michelle Dennis <a href="mailto:mdennis@adler.edu">mdennis@adler.edu</a> (312) 662-4364
<b>Program Description</b>	<p>In June 2021, Adler University Online Campus initiated a pilot program at Big Muddy River Correctional Center. The 8-week course provided an opportunity for 10 incarcerated students to engage in virtual courses on applied psychology. Using university-provided laptops, students accessed recorded and live sessions, and took part in individual and group projects.</p> <p>Adler is now assessing student feedback and outcomes with a goal of launching a degree program this year. The university plans to accept students with associate degrees or 60 college credits into their program, which will offer bachelor's degrees in applied psychology.</p>
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts volunteers. Anyone interested in teaching online courses can apply to Adler University. Anyone from the Ina, IL region can apply to serve as an in-person tutor.

## Augustana College: Augustana Prison Education Program

<b>College/University</b>	Augustana College
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	East Moline Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2021
<b>Contact Info</b>	Sharon Varallo <a href="mailto:sharonvarallo@augustana.edu">sharonvarallo@augustana.edu</a> (309) 794-7387
<b>Program Description</b>	<p>Augustana Prison Education Program (APEP) launched at East Moline Correctional Center in August 2021. Through Augustana College, the program offers full-time, four-year bachelor's degrees to incarcerated individuals. Courses include history, literature, mathematics, foreign languages, religion, science, and the arts. Currently, the program offers a communications studies major, with additional majors to be added in the future. APEP admits 18 students annually or semi-annually.</p>
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, <a href="#">click here</a> , select "Other," and enter "APEP" in the "Designations" box or contact Sharon Varallo at <a href="mailto:sharonvarallo@augustana.edu">sharonvarallo@augustana.edu</a> .

## Benedictine University: Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program

<b>College/University</b>	Benedictine University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Sheridan Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2019
<b>Contact Info</b>	Chez Rumpf <a href="mailto:crumpf@ben.edu">crumpf@ben.edu</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	Developed at Temple University in 1997, the Inside-Out model brings traditional university students and incarcerated students together to study as peers for a semester-long class that meets inside a prison. Benedictine University offers an Inside-Out course each spring at Sheridan Correctional Center, with the goal of generating social change through transformative education. Examples of courses that have been offered through the program include a cross-listed, upper-level criminal justice and sociology elective titled Transformative Justice. All students earn three credits upon completing the course.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, <a href="#">click here</a> , select “Other” under “Designations,” and enter “Inside-Out” in the “Other Designations” box.

## Danville Area Community College

<b>College/University</b>	Danville Area Community College
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Danville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2014
<b>Contact Info</b>	McKenna Allison <a href="mailto:mallison@dacc.edu">mallison@dacc.edu</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	Danville Area Community College offers a wide variety of courses and programs at Danville Correctional Center designed to assist incarcerated students in advancing their education. The college provides courses for associate degree programs, as well as a tutoring program for students enrolled in academic courses, a peer-to-peer tutoring program for students not enrolled in courses, and a career tech course for incarcerated people nearing their release date. Degrees offered by the college include Associate in Art and Associate in General Studies.

## DePaul University: Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program

<b>College/University</b>	DePaul University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Stateville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2012
<b>Contact Info</b>	Helen Damon-Moore, <a href="mailto:hdamonmo@depaul.edu">hdamonmo@depaul.edu</a> Nila Ginger Hofman, <a href="mailto:nhofman@depaul.edu">nhofman@depaul.edu</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	<a href="#">DePaul University's Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program</a> operates as part of the national Inside-Out Center at Temple University. DePaul brings together incarcerated and traditional students at Stateville Correctional Center to learn as peers and engage in a variety of topics. Through this exchange, the university hopes to facilitate transformative learning experiences that emphasize collaboration and dialogue on social justice issues.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program holds occasional drives for supplies such as books, personal protective equipment, and soap.

## Eastern Illinois University

<b>College/University</b>	Eastern Illinois University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Danville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2021
<b>Contact Info</b>	Kim Redfern <a href="mailto:karedfn2@eiu.edu">karedfn2@eiu.edu</a> (217) 581-5618
<b>Program Description</b>	Eastern Illinois University offers a flexible, transfer-friendly degree completion program at Danville Correctional Center. The university accepts up to 100 semester hours for incarcerated students seeking to complete their bachelor's degree. Eastern also offers credit for life experience outside the traditional classroom, such as on the job or in the military.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, reach out to Olivia Koester at <a href="mailto:okkoester@eiu.edu">okkoester@eiu.edu</a> .



## Kaskaskia College

<b>College/University</b>	Kaskaskia College
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Centralia Correctional Center
<b>Contact Info</b>	Rachel Varel <a href="mailto:Rachel.Varel@illinois.gov">Rachel.Varel@illinois.gov</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	Kaskaskia College provides vocational and academic programs at Centralia Correctional Center. Kaskaskia offers an associate degree program, several certificates, and a career tech course for incarcerated people nearing their release date which provides a variety of skills necessary to obtain and maintain employment.

## Millikin University: Shakespeare Corrected

<b>College/University</b>	Millikin University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Decatur Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2009
<b>Contact Info</b>	Alex Miller <a href="mailto:avmiller@millikin.edu">avmiller@millikin.edu</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	<a href="#"><u>Shakespeare Corrected</u></a> is a volunteer-based program offered at Decatur Correctional Center. The program brings undergraduate students together with marginalized populations to create an artistic experience that results in an atmosphere of respectful inclusion and supported expression. The nine-month program builds skills through monologues and discussion in the fall, building to a full-scale Shakespeare play in the spring. Cut down from the original versions, the productions are about 90 minutes long and performed for friends, family, and other incarcerated people.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, <a href="#"><u>click here</u></a> .

## North Park University: School of Restorative Arts

<b>College/University</b>	North Park University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Stateville Correctional Center Logan Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2018
<b>Contact Info</b>	Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom <a href="mailto:mclifton-soderstrom@northpark.edu">mclifton-soderstrom@northpark.edu</a> (773) 244-5753
<b>Program Description</b>	Administered through North Park Theological Seminary, the <a href="#">School of Restorative Arts</a> offers a master's degree in Christian ministry and restorative arts at Stateville Correctional Center and Logan Correctional Center. The program prepares incarcerated individuals for ministries of restoration in contexts susceptible to violence, and includes courses in trauma, race relations, nonviolent communication, conflict transformation, restorative practices and transformative justice, in addition to theology and the Bible. Eighty incarcerated men at Stateville are currently enrolled in this program, as well as a first cohort of 20 women at Logan.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, <a href="#">click here</a> .

## Northeastern Illinois University: University Without Walls

<b>College/University</b>	Northeastern Illinois University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Stateville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2017
<b>Contact Info</b>	Timothy Barnett <a href="mailto:t-barnett1@neiu.edu">t-barnett1@neiu.edu</a> (773) 442-6030
<b>Program Description</b>	<a href="#">Northeastern Illinois University's University Without Walls (UWW)</a> , in partnership with the Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project (see below), offers a bachelor's degree program at Stateville Correctional Center. UWW is a non-traditional, competency-based degree-completion program that serves incarcerated students who have professional, community, political, and life experiences that have resulted in significant college-level learning. Enrolled students work with advisory teams to design an individualized curriculum that leads to a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree. Areas of study and included critical carceral-legal studies, poetic justice in Black culture, and transformative justice and resource development for nonprofits. UWW admitted a first cohort of eight men in 2017 and a second cohort of five men in 2020.

## Northwestern University: Northwestern Prison Education Program

<b>College/University</b>	Northwestern University
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Stateville Correctional Center Logan Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2018
<b>Contact Info</b>	Jennifer Lackey <a href="mailto:npep@northwestern.edu">npep@northwestern.edu</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	The <a href="#">Northwestern Prison Education Program</a> (NPEP) is an initiative of Northwestern University that offers a full liberal arts curriculum to incarcerated students at Stateville Correctional Center (in partnership with Oakton Community College) and Logan Correctional Center. NPEP is a degree-granting, interdisciplinary program with 59 enrolled students in 3 cohorts, 2 at Stateville and 1 at Logan.
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program welcomes passionate, dedicated interns at Stateville, as well as on the Evanston and Chicago campuses. Learn more about NPEP's internships <a href="#">here</a> . This program also accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, click <a href="#">here</a> .

## Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project

<b>College/University</b>	Several
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Stateville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2011
<b>Contact Info</b>	Timmy Châu <a href="mailto:contactpnap@gmail.com">contactpnap@gmail.com</a>
<b>Program Description</b>	The Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project (PNAP) is a visual arts and education project that connects teaching artists and scholars to incarcerated students at Stateville Correctional Center through classes, workshops, a policy think tank, and guest lectures. Each year, PNAP offers 13-15 non-credit college-level courses in subjects ranging from printmaking and criminology to poetry and women's studies. PNAP also offers a degree-granting program with Northeastern Illinois University (see above).
<b>Get Involved</b>	This program accepts monetary donations. To make a financial contribution, <a href="#">click here</a> .

## University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign: Education Justice Project

<b>College/University</b>	Several
<b>IDOC Facility</b>	Danville Correctional Center
<b>Founded</b>	2008
<b>Contact Info</b>	Ellen Ritter <a href="mailto:info@educationjustice.net">info@educationjustice.net</a> (217) 300-5150
<b>Program Description</b>	Launched at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2008, the <a href="#">Education Justice Project (EJP)</a> provides a comprehensive college-in-prison program at Danville Correctional Center. EJP's academic offerings include for-credit courses, advising and tutoring, English as a Second Language, workshops, guest lectures, an anti-violence group, and more. In addition to educational programs at Danville, EJP's Reentry Guide Initiative publishes reentry guides and videos; its Prison to Gown Pathway Initiative is assessing the needs of formerly incarcerated students on campus; and, its scholarship program offers need-based assistance to individuals impacted by incarceration in the U.S. and Mexico. EJP also engages in research and public education that supports the implementation of thoughtful, evidence-based, ethical policies related to higher education in prison, reentry, and other relevant issues.
<b>Get Involved</b>	There are several ways to get involved with EJP. To learn more, <a href="#">click here</a> . To make a financial contribution, <a href="#">click here</a> .

## Career and Technical Education Programs in Illinois Correctional Centers

Three Illinois community colleges offer career and technical education (CTE) programs in Illinois correctional centers. These programs provide hands-on training, allowing students to acquire technical skills in preparation for release. Together, they offer CTE and vocational programs at 23 of the 28 IDOC correctional centers.

1. Danville Area Community College at Danville Correctional Center
2. Kaskaskia College at Centralia Correctional Center
3. Lake Land College at
  - Big Muddy River Correctional Center
  - Decatur Correctional Center
  - Dixon Correctional Center
  - East Moline Correctional Center
  - Graham Correctional Center
  - Hill Correctional Center
  - Illinois River Correctional Center
  - Jacksonville Correctional Center
  - Joliet Treatment Center
  - Lawrence Correctional Center
  - Lincoln Correctional Center
  - Logan Correctional Center
  - Pinckneyville Correctional Center
  - Robinson Correctional Center
  - Shawnee Correctional Center
  - Sheridan Correctional Center
  - Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center
  - Taylorville Correctional Center
  - Vandalia Correctional Center
  - Vienna Correctional Center
  - Western Illinois Correctional Center

Danville Area Community College and Kaskaskia College offer both academic and CTE programs. To learn more about either of these programs, see the program guide on p. 5.

Lake Land College has offered academic courses in the past. However, during the current academic year, Lake Land is offering only CTE and vocational programs. To learn more about Lake Land's offerings, contact Brandon Young, [byoung17159@lakelandcollege.edu](mailto:byoung17159@lakelandcollege.edu) or Jennifer Billingsley, [jbillingsley@lakelandcollege.edu](mailto:jbillingsley@lakelandcollege.edu)

## Illinois Correctional Centers Lacking Higher Education

The number of prison higher education programs in Illinois has grown over the last decade, but the majority of people incarcerated in IDOC correctional centers still have no access to HEP.

Currently, 20 IDOC facilities do not host any academic higher education program:

1. Dixon Correctional Center
2. Graham Correctional Center
3. Hill Correctional Center
4. Illinois River Correctional Center
5. Jacksonville Correctional Center
6. Joliet Correctional Center
7. Lawrence Correctional Center
8. Lincoln Correctional Center
9. Menard Correctional Center
10. Menard Medium Security Unit
11. Pinckneyville Correctional Center
12. Pontiac Correctional Center
13. Pontiac Medium Security Unit
14. Robinson Correctional Center
15. Shawnee Correctional Center
16. Southwestern Correctional Center
17. Taylorville Correctional Center
18. Vandalia Correctional Center
19. Vienna Correctional Center
20. Western Illinois Correctional Center

Four IDOC facilities do not host any academic higher education, CTE, or vocational education programs:

1. Menard Correctional Center
2. Menard Medium Security Unit
3. Pontiac Correctional Center
4. Pontiac Medium Security Unit

## Illinois Maps Depicting Locations of Correctional Centers and Institutions of Higher Education

