**The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program**

**Ethical Considerations**

1. **Credits:** In most places, academic course credits are not available to inside students, though they are to outside students. What are some of the ethical tensions regarding course credit? What factors would you consider in deciding when it is ethically important for inside credits to be available, and when is it ethically important to be willing to offer Inside-Out courses without credit for inside students?
2. **No Non-Programmatic Contact:** The Inside-Out Program prohibits non-programmatic contact between inside and outside participants while the latter remains under criminal justice supervision. Yet there are ethical tensions involved with the policy. Imagine that two of your students tell you that they want to have personal correspondence with one another after the course ends and that they think the no-contact policy is unethical and dehumanizing. What would you say to them about the policy? What purposes might it serve that could justify it ethically?
3. **Othering:** In what ways does Inside-Out seek to prevent “othering,” and in what ways might Inside-Out inadvertently promote such othering (for example, even within this training)? What kinds of othering can happen in an Inside-Out classroom and what can/should be done to mitigate it or address it?
4. **Privileged Differentials:** In an Inside-Out course, in what ways do you think the outside students tend to be in a position of privilege in comparison to inside students and vice versa? What kinds of challenges does this create in the classroom? To what extent can these positions of privilege be leveled within the classroom? Besides credits, in what ways might inside and outside students obtain the same benefits from taking an Inside-Out course, and in what ways might they be different? If the benefits are different, what factors would you consider in thinking through whether or not the course exploits (or privileges) one group of students at the expense of the other? What might you change?
5. **Academic Freedom:** You want to teach an Inside-Out course on prisons in the U.S. The state department of corrections is okay with the idea, but when you show your book list to the prison superintendent, which includes Angela Davis’ *Are Prisons Obsolete* and Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow*, they balk at approving the books. What factors do you consider in deciding whether to make some changes to your syllabus or stand on the principle of academic freedom and not teach the course?
6. **Advocacy/Activism:** Inside-Out is not an advocacy or an activist program. Yet, in so many Inside-Out courses, the course themes, readings, written work, and dialogue focus on social justice issues and the need for equity and social and systemic transformations. What are some of the distinctions between advocacy/activism and change-making? Is Inside-Out involved in change-making? Should it be? Can it be? How?
7. **Institutional Boundaries:** As an Inside-Out instructor, what it if you see or hear about something in the prison, during the course of the semester, that you think is an ethical violation or even a safety concern, for example: something related to solitary confinement, lack of adequate healthcare, or disrespectful treatment of incarcerated people by staff? What if a corrections officer says something offensive to you or about one of your students? What do you do, if anything, regarding any of these possibilities? Can you think of ways to transparently and safely address your concern(s) without jeopardizing the program’s continuation at the facility more broadly? When should you address a situation directly, when should you express concern to a “higher up” administrator, and/or when should you let it drop?