



Budgeting for Results

IDOC Post-Secondary Education Program Assessment



Introduction

The statute that created Budgeting for Results (BFR) states that in Illinois, budgets submitted and appropriations made must adhere to a method of budgeting where priorities are justified each year according to merit (Public Act 96-958). The BFR Commission, established by the same statute, has worked since 2011 to create and implement a structure for data-driven program assessment useful to decision makers.

The BFR framework utilizes the Results First benefit-cost model and the State Program Assessment Rating Tool to produce comprehensive assessments of state funded programs.

The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative developed a benefit-cost analysis model based on methods from the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP). The Results First benefit-cost model can conduct analysis on programs within multiple policy domains including; adult crime, juvenile justice, substance use disorders, K-12 education, general prevention, health, higher education, mental health, and workforce development.

The State Program Assessment Rating Tool (SPART) combines both quantitative (benefit-cost results) and qualitative components in a comprehensive report. It is based on the federal Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) developed by the President's Office of Management and Budget and has been modified for state use. The SPART provides a universal rating classification to allow policy makers and the public to more easily compare programs and their performance across results areas.

Methods

BFR begins each assessment by modeling an Illinois program's design and assessing its implementation. Each program is then matched with an existing rigorously studied program or policy. BFR completes a comprehensive review of related program literature to inform the modeling and matching process.

Each rigorously studied program has an effect size determined from existing validated research that summarizes the extent to which a program impacts a desired outcome. The effect size is useful in understanding the impact of a program run with fidelity to best practices or core principles.

The Results First benefit-cost model uses the effect size combined with the state's unique population and resource characteristics to project the optimal return on investment that can be realized by taxpayers, victims of crime, and others in society when program goals are achieved.

The SPART contains summary program information, historical and current budgetary information, the statutory authority for the program, performance goals and performance measures. The SPART tool consists of weighted questions, which tally to give a program a numerical score of 1-100. Numerical scores are converted into qualitative assessments of program performance: effective, moderately effective, marginal and not effective.

Section 1

Results First Benefit-Cost Report

Benefit-Cost Summary – IDOC Post-Secondary Education

This is the pilot benefit-cost analysis in the Adult Crime domain of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) Post-Secondary Education program. The IDOC Post-Secondary Education program was chosen to be analyzed with the Results First model due to potentially large benefits it could achieve over time for the State. The program offers offenders in IDOC custody the opportunity to take coursework and earn credit toward a post-secondary degree. This can increase offenders’ earnings and employment potential after release, which can reduce their risk of recidivism.

The IDOC Post-Secondary Education program served 10,637 inmate students in FY2017, with a budget of just over \$3 million. This pilot benefit-cost analysis completed by BFR calculated that for every one dollar spent on the Post-Secondary Education program by IDOC, **\$38.75** of future costs could be realized by Illinois taxpayers and crime victims.

The major takeaways from this analysis can be found in *Table 1* below. The optimal benefits are projected for programs run with fidelity to best practices or core principles. The optimal benefits are determined using a standard metric called an effect size. The real costs of a program are the sum of its direct and indirect costs. The benefit/cost ratio is the optimal return on investment (OROI) Illinois can expect from implementing the program with fidelity. BFR performs a Monte Carlo risk estimate showing the percent of time that the benefits exceed the costs when simulated 10,000 times with random variation in costs and benefits.

Table 1:

Benefit-Cost Results IDOC Post-Secondary Education per Participant	
Optimal Benefits	\$14,959
Real Cost (Net)	\$386
Benefits - Costs	\$14,573
Benefits/Costs (OROI)	\$38.75
Chance Benefits Will Exceed Costs	%100
SPART Score	70, Moderately Effective

Benefit-Cost Detail – IDOC Post-Secondary Education

Program Information

The IDOC Post-Secondary Education program offers inmates the opportunity to take post-secondary academic classes for credit. One of the primary outcomes this program was implemented to achieve is a reduction in recidivism among offenders released from IDOC custody.

Using program information gathered with IDOC, BFR determined that Illinois' Post-Secondary Education program matched the Corrections-Based Adult Basic/Secondary Education practice profile in the *CrimeSolutions.gov* clearinghouse. The program information for Post-Secondary Education in Illinois was provided by the Office of Adult Education and Vocational Services (OAEVS) at IDOC, and is described in *Table 2* below.

Table 2:

Program Name	Program Description
Post-Secondary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- In FY2017, 10,637 inmate students participated in post-secondary academic classes- Available course options include Baccalaureate, Business, Technical, and Health- The cost IDOC pays for credit hours ranges from \$25 for a Baccalaureate class to \$45 for a Health class. IDOC pays for teachers and for any necessary equipment.- The average cost per person in FY2017 was \$386 per year- Due to a shortage of community college partners, post-secondary education is not available at all IDOC facilities

The clearinghouse rated this type of program as “effective, promising” based on three meta-analyses, each of approximately one dozen individual experimental and quasi-experimental studies. The clearinghouse studies found that “there were significant reductions in recidivism (including reoffending, rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, and technical parole violation) for inmates who participated in postsecondary correctional education (PSCE) compared with inmates who did not participate.”¹

¹ Crime Solutions (<https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=511>)

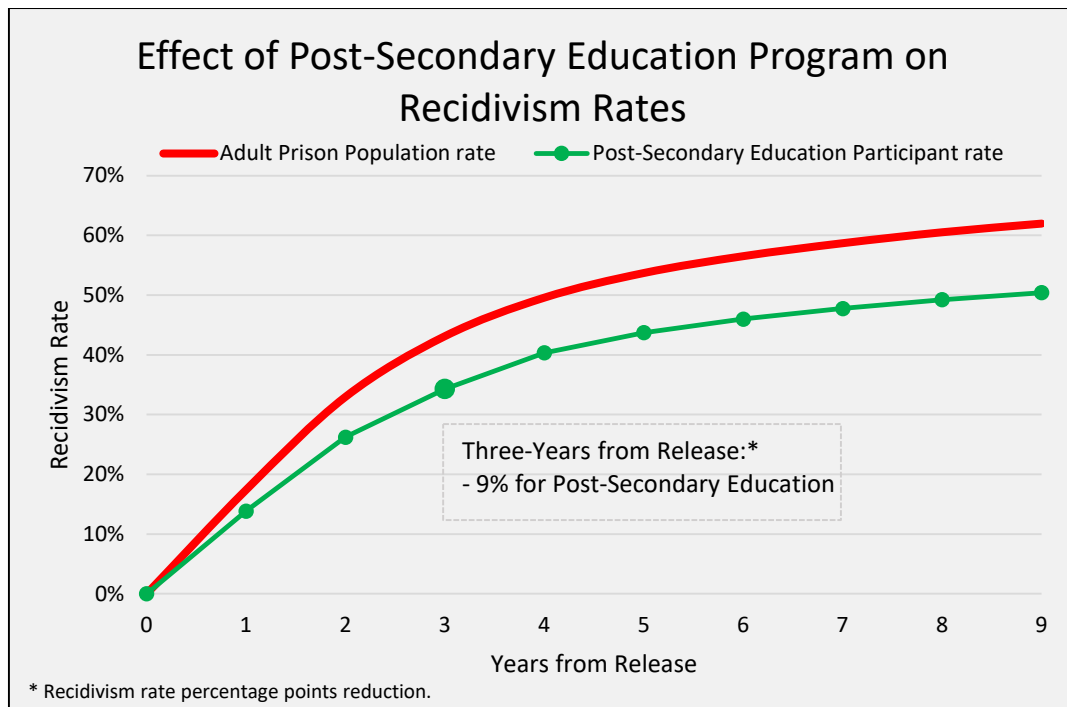
Analysis

A well-run correctional post-secondary education program saves taxpayers' money over time by avoiding future criminal justice expenses. Taxpayers avoid paying for additional criminal justice system costs of arrests and processing; prosecutions, defense, and trials; and incarceration and supervision. Lower recidivism rates lead to fewer prisoners that need to be paid for by the State.

Just as importantly, decreasing recidivism saves money by avoiding private costs incurred as a result of fewer Illinois crime victims. The private victimization costs include lost property, medical bills, wage loss, and the pain and suffering experienced by crime victims.

The benefit-cost model predicts a 9% decrease in the recidivism rate² three years from release from IDOC custody for participants in the Post-Secondary Education program, as illustrated in *Figure 1*. The model also predicts the nine-year recidivism rate for program participants to be 50%, or 11.6% less than the overall adult prison population recidivism rate of 62%.

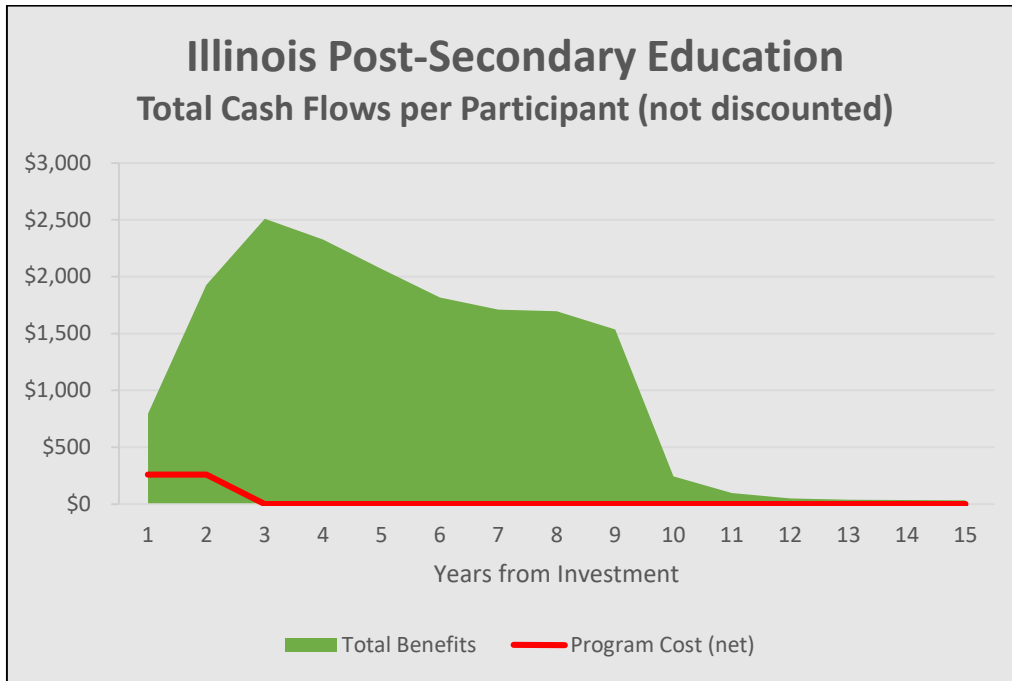
Figure 1:



² Recidivism is defined as reconviction after a release from prison or sentence to probation.

The average cost to the State of Illinois for providing post-secondary education to inmates is \$386 per person per year. The program costs are incurred over two years, while the benefits grow over time after the offender is released from IDOC custody. This is illustrated in *Figure 2* below. The red line depicts net program costs. The green area depicts program benefits. As the graph indicates, over a period of ten years the program could yield over \$14,000 per participant in benefits to the State and society.

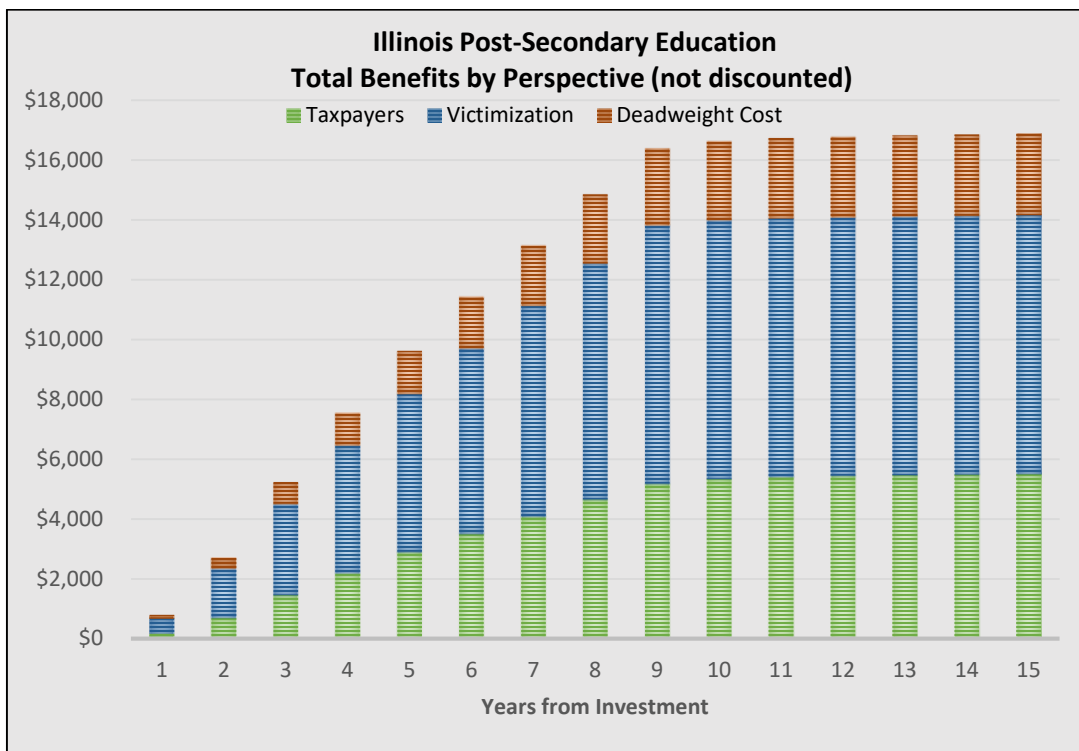
Figure 2:



The IDOC Post-Secondary Education program could optimally produce \$14,959 in future benefits per average participant over ten years. Beyond the direct benefits to Illinois taxpayers and crime victims, additional indirect benefits accrue to society as well, including better use of the tax dollars that are currently raised, and future taxes that won't have to be raised to pay for avoidable costs due to recidivism. When tax revenue is spent on one program, it has an opportunity cost of revenue that cannot be spent on other beneficial programs and services like public safety or economic development. Money that is taxed is also not available for private consumption and investment. The indirect benefits of making effective, economically efficient investments to reduce criminal recidivism are quantified within the Results First model using the Deadweight Cost of Taxation.

Figure 3 below illustrates most of the benefits come from future avoided taxpayer costs and the benefits that come from future victimization costs avoided by society in general. The remaining benefits come from other avoided indirect deadweight costs.

Figure 3:



This is one of three pilot analyses run by BFR using the Results First cost-benefit model. Please see the Budget.Illinois.gov for additional benefit-cost reports and supporting information.

Section 2

State Program Assessment Rating Tool

State Program Assessment Rating Tool (SPART)

Illinois Post-Secondary Education

426- Illinois Department of Corrections

Prior Year (PY), Current Year (CY), Fiscal Year (FY) Budget (in thousands) Appropriated ___ Expended X

PY 2013	PY2014	PY2015	PY2016	CY 2017	FY 2018
\$1,756.5	\$2,044.0	\$2,266.0	\$636.0	\$3,000.9	N/A

Is this program mandated by law? Yes ___ No X
 Identify the Origin of the law. State ___ Federal ___ Other ___
 Statutory Cite _____
 Program Continuum Classification Prevention, Selective

Evaluability

Provide a brief narrative statement on factors that impact the evaluability of this program.

Information technology compatibility between Offender 360 and legacy databases impact the ability of program managers to tack offender data and progress though the program longitudinally. Budgetary impacts from the prolonged impasse resulted in losing several community-colleges that provide the educational services that are the bedrock of this program. This loss impacts the scale of benefits that could potentially be realized by the program.

Performance Goal	FY 2014	FY2015	FY 2016	Major Challenges Meeting this Goal
Recidivism Rate	46.9	45.5	43.9	

Key Performance Measure	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Reported in IPRS Y/N
Post-Secondary education completers	95	140	50	N

Section 2: Evidence Based Programming and Benefit-Cost

Total Points Available: 30

Total Points Awarded: 30

Question	Points Available	Yes/Partial /No	Points Awarded	Explanation
2.1 Is the Program Evidence Based ?	10	YES	10	This program was matched with evidence-based programs in the Results First clearinghouse. Please see the attached clearinghouse reports from the National Institute of Justice
2.2 Does the program have fidelity to best practices?	10	YES	10	This program was matched with evidence-based programs in the Results First clearinghouse. The program is targeted to offenders that have achieved a GED or equivalent. Please see the attached reports from the National Institute of Justice.
2.3 Is the return on investment for this program equal to or greater than \$1 for each \$1 spent?	10	YES	10	The Program did achieve a greater than one dollar return on investment. For details, please see the attached Results First Program Report.

Section 3: Strategic Planning

Total Points Available: 30

Total Points Awarded: 20

Question	Points Available	Yes/Partial /No	Points Awarded	Explanation
3.1 Does the program have a limited number of specific annual performance measures that can demonstrate progress toward achieving the program's long-term goals?	10	Partial	5	Although performance measures are reported in DOC annual reports (see attached) the measure data is not easily accessible, as individual elements are interspersed throughout the narrative text. The most recent published annual report was from 2016, not the current fiscal year.
3.2 Do the annual performance measures focus on outcomes?	10	YES	10	Performance measures focus on participants and completers, which indicate outcomes. See attached annual report.
3.3 Are independent and thorough evaluations Of the program conducted on a regular basis or as needed to support program improvements and evaluate effectiveness?	10	Partial	5	This program does not have any independent evaluations. However, currently, the only program evaluations completed are an annual needs assessment that takes place in the Spring per Administrative Directive. These evaluative and planning practices do meet the criteria for partial credit as established in the SPART guidance.

Section 4: Program Management

Total Points Available: 20

Total Points Awarded: 15

Question	Points Available	Yes/Partial /No	Points Awarded	Explanation
4.1 Does the Agency regularly collect timely and credible performance information?	10	Partial	5	Although performance measures are collected by DOC for their annual reports (see attached) the measure data is not easily accessible, as individual elements are interspersed throughout the narrative text. The most recent published annual report was from 2016, not the current fiscal year.
4.2 Does the Agency use performance information (including that collected from program partners) to adjust program priorities, allocate resources, or take other appropriate management actions?	10	YES	10	The IDOC uses performance information to help determine staffing levels as well as prisoner transfer and location dispositions.

Section 5: Program Results**Total Points Available: 20**

Total Points Awarded: 5

Question	Points Available	Yes/Partial /No	Points Awarded	Explanation
5.1 Does the program (including program partners) commit to and achieve annual performance targets?	10	Partial	5	The IDOC has no annual performance targets for Post-Secondary education. They have a goal of reducing recidivism and creating safer communities.
5.2 Is the program (including program partners) on track to meet all performance goals, including targets and timeframes?	10	NO	0	There is not sufficient information available on targets or timeframes to determine whether this program is on track.

Concluding Comments

Post-Secondary Education programs are run by most states in the country. The Illinois Post-Secondary program meets standards for best practices as established in the Results First Clearinghouse. It is recommended that technology improvements will allow for better tracking of offenders through the program and easier tracking of outcomes. It is further recommended that summary program information and performance measures tracking program outcomes, including Post-Secondary completers, currently collected internally at IDOC, be included in the IPRS. Additionally, staff training may help improve overall program outcomes. It is recommended that program managers engage in setting long-term goals including targets and timeframes. Overall, this program achieves outcomes which are cost-effective and are a benefit to the goal to decrease recidivism and provide a safer Illinois in general.

Final Program Score and Rating

Final Score	Program Rating
70	Moderately Effective

SPART Ratings

Programs that are **PERFORMING** have ratings of **Effective, Moderately Effective, or Adequate.**

- **Effective.** This is the highest rating a program can achieve. Programs rated Effective set ambitious goals, achieve results, are well-managed and improve efficiency. Score 75-100
- **Moderately Effective.** In general, a program rated Moderately Effective has set ambitious goals and is well-managed. Moderately Effective programs likely need to improve their efficiency or address other problems in the programs' design or management in order to achieve better results. Score 50-74
- **Adequate.** This rating describes a program that needs to set more ambitious goals, achieve better results, improve accountability or strengthen its management practices. Score 25-49

Programs categorized as **NOT PERFORMING** have ratings of **Ineffective or Results Not Demonstrated.**

- **Ineffective.** Programs receiving this rating are not using your tax dollars effectively. Ineffective programs have been unable to achieve results due to a lack of clarity regarding the program's purpose or goals, poor management, or some other significant weakness. Score 0-24
- **Results Not Demonstrated.** A rating of Results Not Demonstrated (RND) indicates that a program has not been able to develop acceptable performance goals or collect data to determine whether it is performing.

Glossary

Best Practices: Policies or activities that have been identified through evidence-based policymaking to be most effective in achieving positive outcomes.

Evidence-Based: Systematic use of multiple, rigorous studies and evaluations which demonstrate the efficacy of the program's theory of change and theory of action.

Illinois Performance Reporting System (IPRS): The state's web-based database for collecting program performance data. The IPRS database allows agencies to report programmatic level data to the Governor's Office of Management and Budget on a regular basis.

Optimal Return on Investment (OROI): A dollar amount that expresses the present value of program benefits net of program costs that can be expected if a program is implemented with fidelity to core principles or best practices.

Outcome Measures: Outcomes describe the intended result of carrying out a program or activity. They define an event or condition that is external to the program or activity and that is of direct importance to the intended beneficiaries and/or the general public. For example, one outcome measure of a program aimed to prevent the acquisition and transmission of HIV infection is the number (reduction) of new HIV infections in the state.

Output Measures: Outputs describe the level of activity that will be provided over a period of time, including a description of the characteristics (e.g., timeliness) established as standards for the activity. Outputs refer to the internal activities of a program (i.e., the products and services delivered). For example, an output could be the percentage of warnings that occur more than 20 minutes before a tornado forms.

Results First Clearinghouse Database: One-stop online resource providing policymakers with an easy way to find information on the effectiveness of various interventions as rated by eight nation research clearinghouses which conduct systematic research reviews to identify which policies and interventions work.

Target: A quantifiable metric established by program managers or the funding entity established as a minimum threshold of performance (outcome or output) the program should attain within a specified timeframe. Program results are evaluated against the program target.

Theory Informed: A program where a lesser amount of evidence and/or rigor exists to validate the efficacy of the program's theory of change and theory of action than an evidence-based program.

Theory of Change: The central processes or drives by which a change comes about for individuals, groups and communities

Theory of Action: How programs or other interventions are constructed to activate theories of change.

Practice Profile

Postsecondary Correctional Education (PSCE)

Evidence Ratings for Outcomes:



Crime & Delinquency - Multiple crime/offense types

Practice Description

Practice Goals

Postsecondary correctional education (PSCE) is academic or vocational coursework taken beyond a high school diploma or equivalent that allows inmates to earn credit while they are incarcerated. The credits earned from participating in PSCE may be applied toward an associate's, bachelor's, or graduate degree, depending on the program and participating higher education institution (Gorgol and Sponsler 2011; Davis et al. 2013). The goal of providing PSCE is to advance inmates' educational attainment levels to improve their opportunities for employment following release from prison and reduce their odds of recidivating. The *2005 Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities* found that 85 percent of all reporting facilities offered formal educational programs to inmates. Of these reporting facilities, only 35 percent provided college courses; however, this differed by facility type. For example, almost all federal correctional facilities (100 out of 102) reported providing college courses, but fewer than one third of state facilities provided college-level classes (Stephan 2008). Unfortunately, participation in the programs is not always high and may be decreasing. In 2004, 7.3 percent of state prison inmates participated in college classes. This is down from 1997, when 9.9 percent reported taking college courses, and down even further from 1991 when 13.9 percent participated in college-level classes (Harlow 2003; Crayton and Neusteter 2008). Participation may be waning because of lack of awareness or interest in such programs and/or reduced funding.

Target Population

To participate in PSCE, inmates must have obtained a high school diploma or general equivalency degree (GED) credential. Beyond that minimum requirement, state and federal correctional facilities have a variety of eligibility requirements that attempt to determine who is mostly likely to benefit from PSCE classes and can, therefore, participate. Some of the eligibility requirements may include time to release, the inmate's age, current offense, scores on standardized tests, and any in-prison infractions.

Practice Theory

There are several obstacles that incarcerated adults must face upon their release from prison. For example, low levels of educational attainment, lack of a steady job history, and the stigma of a felony conviction can be serious barriers to finding employment once one is back in the community. The idea behind PSCE programs is to improve inmates' employability and help them meet the demands of fast-evolving, technology-based industries by offering a variety of certificate-based and skill-oriented courses (Nally et al. 2012).

Practice Components

There are a variety of methods used by correctional facilities to deliver PSCE classes to participating inmates, such as onsite instruction, correspondence courses, and video/satellite instruction. Gorgol and Sponsler (2011) conducted a survey of correctional education administrators from 43 states and found that the most common method of program delivery was onsite, in-class instruction. To overcome some of the difficulties with providing onsite instruction (such as limited space for classes and security concerns), some of the state facilities used distance learning or correspondence courses. States were less likely to report using online or video/satellite instructional methods (almost all states prohibit use of the Internet by inmates).

Instruction for the courses may also vary by facility. A 2005 survey by the Institute for Higher Education Policy found that 68 percent of PSCE courses offered in prisons were provided by community colleges. Only 16 percent of PSCE instruction was provided by public 4-year institutions; 10 percent was provided by 4-year private, nonprofit institutions; and 6 percent was provided by other types (such as private for-profit institutions) (Erisman and Contardo 2005).

The focus of PSCE can range from general, liberal arts courses to more job-specific courses. For example, coursework may be available in business, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and computer science (Winterfield et al. 2009). More job-specific postsecondary courses, including some vocational training programs in various fields such as bookkeeping, carpentry, and even coal mining, allow for inmates to earn certificates in those industries (Nally et al. 2012).

Meta-Analysis Outcomes



Crime & Delinquency - Multiple crime/offense types

Overall, three meta-analyses found that there were significant reductions in recidivism (including reoffending, rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, and technical parole violation) for inmates who participated in postsecondary correctional education (PSCE) compared with inmates who did not participate. Wilson, Gallagher, and MacKenzie (2000) examined the outcomes across 13 studies and found that those who participated in PSCE programs were significantly less likely to recidivate than those who did not participate (odds ratio=1.74). This means that, for example, if the comparison group had a recidivism rate of 50 percent, those who participated in PSCE programs would have a recidivism rate of 37 percent. Similarly, when analyzing the results from three studies, Chappell (2004) found a significant, but small effect on recidivism for inmates who participated in PSCE programs (mean $r=0.24$). PSCE participants recidivated at a rate of 22 percent, whereas inmates who did not participate in PSCE recidivated at a rate of 35 percent. Finally, Davis and colleagues (2013) looked at the results from 19 studies and found a significant odds ratio of 0.49, indicating that the odds of recidivating

Practice Snapshot

Age: 18+

Gender: Both

Targeted Population:
 Prisoners

Settings: Correctional

Practice Type: Academic
 Skills Enhancement,
 Aftercare/Reentry,
 Vocational/Job Training

Unit of Analysis: Persons

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among inmates participating in PSCE programs are 49 percent of the odds of recidivating among similar inmates not participating in such programs.

Meta-Analysis Methodology

Meta-Analysis Snapshot				
	Literature Coverage	Dates	Number of Studies	Number of Study Participants
Meta-Analysis 1	1979 - 1997		13	0
Meta-Analysis 2	1990 - 1999		3	2132
Meta-Analysis 3	1980 - 2011		22	0

Meta-Analysis 1

Wilson, Gallagher, and MacKenzie (2000) examined the effectiveness of corrections-based education, vocation, and work programs for adult offenders through a meta-analysis of 33 experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations. Studies were included in the meta-analysis if they 1) evaluated an education, vocational, or work program for convicted adults or persons identified by the criminal justice system, 2) provided a postprogram measure of recidivism (including arrest, conviction, self-report, technical violation, or incarceration), 3) included a nonprogram comparison group (a comparison group that did not receive an educational, vocational, or work program), 4) were published after 1975 in English.

A thorough search of the literature led to the inclusion of 33 eligible studies. The program comparison–contrast was the unit of analysis, allowing for multiple program comparison–contrasts for each study. The 33 studies reported 53 program comparison–contrasts that were identified and coded for the analysis. More than 40 percent of the studies (14 out of 33) were from journal articles or book chapters. The other studies were either government documents (10 out of 33) or unpublished manuscripts (9 out of 33). The studies generally had large sample sizes. The median number of participants across the program groups was 129, and the median number across the comparison groups was 320 (a total number of participants was not provided). Slightly fewer than half of the studies included only male participants. Female participants were included in 19 studies; however, they generally represented fewer than 21 percent of the study sample, therefore it is difficult to generalize findings from the analysis to women. In the remainder of the studies, it was unclear whether study participants included both men and women. Information on the age and racial/ethnic breakdown of the study samples was not provided.

There were 13 studies (out of 33) that examined the relative effects of postsecondary education. The form of effect size selected was the odds ratio. Recidivism was the primary outcome of interest. This was measured as a dichotomy (i.e., the percentage or proportion of program and comparison participants who recidivated).

Meta-Analysis 2

Chappell (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of studies examining the effects of postsecondary correctional education (PSCE) on recidivism. Only published articles and unpublished research finalized between 1990 and 1999 were included in the review. PSCE was defined as any type of education beyond high school, or its equivalency, that has inmates in prisons or jails for students (including vocational, academic, undergraduate, graduate, certificate, or degree programs). If studies combined data on inmates participating in PSCE with inmates receiving adult basic education and GED courses, they were eliminated. Studies had to include recidivism rates of program participants to be included. Studies were located through literature reviews and requests of information from the Correctional Education Association. The review included correlational and quasi-experimental studies.

Fifteen studies were included, with a total sample size of 7,320 subjects. However, because the 15 studies included research designs without control groups, a smaller meta-analysis was conducted specifically with the studies that had control groups. In this smaller meta-analysis, there were only three studies with control groups, for a total sample size of 2,132 subjects. No information was provided on the age, gender, or racial/ethnic breakdown of the studies' samples, nor on the location of the programs.

The effect size was calculated as the sample-weighted mean r , so that studies with larger sample sizes were given more weight than those based on smaller samples.

Meta-Analysis 3

Davis and colleagues (2013) conducted a meta-analysis of evaluations examining the effectiveness of programs that provide education to incarcerated adults. A comprehensive literature search was done that covered the period from Jan. 1, 1980, through Dec. 31, 2011. To be included in the review, a study needed to 1) evaluate an eligible intervention, 2) measure success of the program using an eligible outcome measure, and 3) employ an eligible research design. Eligible interventions were defined as educational programs administered in jails or prisons in the United States and published (or released) during the time covered by the review. In this review, postsecondary education was defined as college-level instruction that enables an individual to earn college credit that may be applied toward a 2- or 4-year postsecondary degree. Eligible outcomes were defined as measures of recidivism (including reoffending, rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, technical parole violation, and successful completion of parole), employment (including having ever worked part time or full time since release, having been employed for a specified number of weeks since release, and employment status), and achievement test scores. Eligible research designs were those in which there is a treatment group composed of inmates who participated in or completed the correctional education program under consideration and a comparison group composed of inmates who did not.

The search resulted in the inclusion of 58 eligible studies. Of the 58 studies, 22 looked at the effectiveness of postsecondary education programs on recidivism rates. There were not enough studies looking at the effects of postsecondary education on employment and achievement test scores to calculate an effect size. No information was provided on the age, gender, or racial/ethnic breakdown of the studies' samples. The programs were located at correctional facilities throughout the United States.

The meta-analysis used a random-effects approach. The form of effect size selected was the odds ratio. The quality of each study was rated using the University of Maryland's five-point scale; only studies that received a rating of 2 or higher on the scale were included in the analysis (a rating of 2 means a study used a quasi-experimental design but there were substantial baseline differences between the treatment and comparison groups that may not be controlled for well). The U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) rating scheme was also used, because the WWC instrument scores education studies; however, the Maryland Scale was primarily used to determine the rigor of studies.

Cost

Davis and colleagues (2013) conducted a straightforward cost analysis using estimates of the costs of correctional education and of reincarceration. They estimated that the average annual cost of correctional education programs per inmate participant was between \$1,400 and \$1,744. The authors used a hypothetical sample of 100 inmates and assumed that correctional education would reduce reincarceration rates by 12.9 percentage points (based on the results from the meta-analysis). It was estimated that 3-year incarceration costs for those who did not receive correctional education would be between \$2.94 million and \$3.25 million. In comparison, the 3-year incarceration costs for those who did receive correctional education would be between \$2.07 million and \$2.28 million. This would mean the reincarceration costs are between \$870,000 and \$970,000 less for those who receive correctional education.

Other Information

The federal Pell Grant program awards student aid for postsecondary education based on financial need. The grants were a major source of funding to pay for inmates to participate in postsecondary correctional education (PSCE) programs and receive credit without being heavily reliant on state or personal financing (Gorgol and Sponsler 2011). However, access to postsecondary education was severely limited with the passage of the Violent Crime Control Act in 1994. Inmates were no longer eligible for Pell entitlement grants beginning in the 1995–96 academic year (Tewksbury, Erickson, and Taylor 2000). Later, the passage of the Workforce and Community Transition Training for Incarcerated Youth Offenders Program (IYO) began providing funding for postsecondary academic and vocational education for youth offenders. The IYO statute limited participation to PSCE programs to persons 25 or younger who had earned a high school diploma or GED certificate and were within 5 years of release (the age limit was raised to 35 with the passage of the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008). The IYO grants and successor programs are the most commonly used source of funding to support PSCE programming (Gorgol and Sponsler 2011). The 2008 passage of the Second Chance Act, designed to improve reentry of incarcerated individuals, also provided funding toward a wide range of educational programming, including PSCE programs. But many inmates still rely on paying for postsecondary coursework using their own money.

Evidence-Base (Meta-Analyses Reviewed)

These sources were used in the development of the practice profile:

Meta-Analysis 1

Wilson, David B., Catherine A. Gallagher, and Doris Layton MacKenzie. 2000. "A Meta-Analysis of Corrections-Based Education, Vocation, and Work Programs for Adult Offenders." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 37(4):347–68.

Meta-Analysis 2

Chappell, Cathryn A. 2004. "Postsecondary Correctional Education and Recidivism: A Meta-Analysis of Research Conducted 1990–99." *Journal of Correctional Education* 55(2):148–69.

Meta-Analysis 3

Davis, Lois M., Robert Bozick, Jennifer L. Steele, Jessica Saunders, and Jeremy N.V. Miles. 2013. *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, the Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.
https://www.bja.gov/Publications/RAND_Correctional-Education-Meta-Analysis.pdf

Additional References

These sources were used in the development of the practice profile:

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Related Programs

Following are CrimeSolutions.gov-rated programs that are related to this practice:

Postsecondary Correctional Education (New Mexico)

The program provides postsecondary educational classes and programs to prisoners via one-way Internet courses or onsite vocational instruction. The goal of the program is to reduce arrests following release from prison. The program is rated Promising. This program was shown to significantly reduce arrests within the 1-year follow-up period.

College Program at Maryland Correctional Training Center (MCTC)

This program offered postsecondary education for incarcerated individuals to reduce or break the cycle of continued or repeated criminal behavior. The program is rated Promising. Participants in the program had a statistically significant lower rate of arrests for a new crime than comparison group members.



Program Profile: Postsecondary Correctional Education (New Mexico)

Evidence Rating: Promising - One study 

Date: This profile was posted on *March 13, 2017*

Program Snapshot

Age: 24 - 40

Gender: Both

Race/Ethnicity: Black, Hispanic, White, Other

Setting (Delivery): Correctional

Program Type: Academic Skills Enhancement, Aftercare/Reentry, Vocational/Job Training

Targeted Population: Prisoners

Current Program Status: Active

Listed by Other Directories: National Reentry Resource Center

Program Summary

The program provides postsecondary educational classes and programs to prisoners via one-way Internet courses or onsite vocational instruction. The goal of the program is to reduce arrests following release from prison. The program is rated Promising. This program was shown to significantly reduce arrests within the 1-year follow-up period.

Program Description

Program Goals

The Postsecondary Correctional Education program is an educational intervention offered to incarcerated individuals in New Mexico state prisons. Prisoners are offered college-level academic or vocational courses through one-way Internet connections or onsite programs. The primary objective is to reduce recidivism rates of inmates once they are released from prison. Secondary objectives are to increase self-esteem and reduce inmate behavior problems while in prison.

Program Eligibility

To participate in postsecondary educational programs, inmates must have a GED or high school diploma, record of appropriate behavior while in the prison system, tested to determine readiness for courses, and not serving time for murder, child abuse, or a sex offense.

Program Components

Postsecondary correctional education programs are offered in seven out of nine state prisons in New Mexico. The programs are offered statewide so that students can continue in postsecondary education if they are transferred to another prison. A variety of correctional education programs are available. For example, there is a business administration and university studies associates' degree program, and a bachelor's degree program in business administration. There are also vocational certificate programs, in which inmates take one course per session.

The postsecondary educational programs in New Mexico state prisons have two delivery models: Internet or onsite instruction. College-level programs are taught via one-way, Internet instruction. Inmates enrolled in vocational courses receive onsite instruction. All vocational programs are taught by the New Mexico Corrections Department's Education Bureau, while college courses are provided through a "Web Course Tool" (WebCt), which connects to Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU). The closed WebCt connection is similar to what is offered in the web-based instruction that is available to ENMU's other students, but inmates do not have access to the Internet through the live system.

Program Theory

There are several obstacles that incarcerated adults must face upon their release from prison. On average, prison inmates are less educated than the general public. The idea behind providing educational programming in prison is to help inmates successfully reenter society with basic skills such as math, reading, and writing, which are necessary for everyday living. By improving academic and vocational skills of prisoners, they should have increased prospects of gainful employment and reduce their odds of recidivating (Wilson, Gallagher, and MacKenzie 2000).

Evaluation Outcomes

Study 1

New Arrests

Winterfield and colleagues (2009) found that overall the new arrest rate was significantly lower for inmates who participated in the postsecondary correctional education program while in a New Mexico state prison, compared with inmates who did not participate, at the 1-year follow-up.

Evaluation Methodology

Study 1

Winterfield and colleagues (2009) conducted a quasi-experimental design to examine the impact of postsecondary education on incarcerated individuals in the New Mexico prison system. The total study sample was 3,873 prisoners (353 in the treatment group and 3,520 in the comparison group). The comparison group was formed from prisoners who did not want to participate in postsecondary education. Propensity score matching was used to ensure the treatment, and comparison groups were similar on baseline characteristics. The treatment and comparison groups were 90 percent male; and were 80 percent white, 9 percent black, and 10 percent other race. In terms of ethnicity, the groups were 53 percent Hispanic, and the average age was

approximately 30 years. No significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups remained after the propensity weight was applied.

The treatment group was enrolled in college-level academic coursework (associate's degree program in business administration or university studies, or bachelor's degree program in business studies) taught via one-way, Internet connection or in vocational coursework that was taught onsite in the prison. The comparison group did not participate in the postsecondary education program.

The follow-up time period was 1 year after release from prison. The study took place from January 1, 2003, through December 31, 2005. Data information was collected from the New Mexico State Department of Corrections. The main outcome of interest was recidivism, which was defined as a new arrest for either a new offense or technical violation. Logistic regression was used to examine the data.

Cost

The postsecondary correctional education programs in New Mexico were funded by state and federal Incarcerated Youth Offender (IYO) block grants (Winterfield et al. 2009). However, it is not known how the programs are currently funded.

Evidence-Base (Studies Reviewed)

These sources were used in the development of the program profile:

Study 1

Winterfield, Laura, Mark Coggeshall, Michelle Burke-Stover, Vanessa Correa, and Simon Todd. 2009. *The Effects of Postsecondary Correctional Education: Final Report*. Washington: D.C.: Urban Institute.

<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/30626/411954-The-Effects-of-Postsecondary-Correctional-Education.PDF>

Additional References

These sources were used in the development of the program profile:

Wilson, David B., Catherine A. Gallagher, and Doris Layton MacKenzie. 2000. "A Meta-Analysis of Corrections-Based Education, Vocation, and Work Programs for Adult Offenders." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 37(4):347–68.

Related Practices

Following are CrimeSolutions.gov-rated practices that are related to this program:

[Postsecondary Correctional Education \(PSCE\)](#)

Postsecondary correctional education is academic or vocational coursework taken beyond a high school diploma or equivalent that allows inmates to earn credit while they are incarcerated. The practice is rated Promising in reducing recidivism (including reoffending, rearrest, reconviction, reincarceration, and technical parole violation) for inmates who participated compared to nonparticipants.

Evidence Ratings for Outcomes:



Crime & Delinquency - Multiple crime/offense types