

What's the Time Commitment?

It depends. If you offer a one-time math, science, writing, or business workshop, you'll meet with your students only once. Other workshops run for multiple weeks. The frequency of a workshop depends on the instructor's pedagogical goals and schedule.

EJP programs like Language Partners, Mindfulness Discussion Group, and Chicago Anti-Violence Education (CAVE) meet on specific days of the week, and their members typically go out at least twice a month. Writing and math partners (tutors) also visit the prison about every other week, or twice each month.

In addition, we expect EJP members to contribute to the life and health of the program on campus by attending retreats, trainings, workshops, and other events as they're able.

If I Teach a For-Credit Course, Must It Run for 15 Full Weeks?

No. EJP also offers 1 - and 2- credit classes. They may run for 5 or 10 weeks only. There's considerable flexibility.

Do I Have to Be Affiliated with U of I to Teach in the Program?

No. However, you must have whatever qualifications would be necessary to teach a given course on the Urbana-Champaign campus and you must be willing to come to campus to participate in EJP training and activities.

I Don't Have a Car. Can I Participate in EJP?

Absolutely. We travel via car pools to Danville Correctional Center. In fact, many of our members don't own cars.

I'm Not an American Citizen. Can I Participate with EJP?

Yes. It is not necessary to have U.S. citizenship. Many of our members are foreign nationals.

How Much Do You Pay?

EJP instructors are not compensated, at least not financially.

I Support EJP's Work, But Am Unable to Go to the Prison. Is there a Role for Me?

Certainly. Please consider getting involved in our Illinois Reentry Guide Initiative or Ripple Effect (Reaching Into Prisons with Purpose and Love), both based in Champaign. If you're in Chicago, we encourage you to get involved with planning the EJP Expo.

I Support EJP's Work, But I'm Afraid to Enter a Prison.

That's natural. Prisons are unpleasant places. Please know that we provide training and support. We make process groups available and have a retreat each semester. We're aware that having regular engagement with the violence of incarceration brings up issues for many of our members. EJP is intentional about creating space to address those feelings. We hope that any revulsion or dis-ease our members feel towards the American system of incarceration will be directed towards changing it.

We also acknowledge that working in a prison isn't for everyone. Please consider other ways of supporting incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, whether through EJP or other groups.

The mission of the Education Justice project is to build a model college-in-prison program that demonstrates the positive impacts of higher education upon incarcerated people, their families, the neighborhoods from which they come, the host institution, and society as a whole.