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Civic Engagement for the Future Criminal Justice Professional: Serving the Underserved in a Correctional Setting

Kimberly Collica-Cox

Abstract

This project—Parenting, Prison, and Pups—is designed to help students think as socially responsible persons, in addition to understanding and caring about the world they will enter as criminal justice professionals. By becoming civically aware and involved, these students will be servicing one of society's most underserved populations, female prisoners and their children. This program involves college students in remediating some of the most difficult problems within our criminal justice system, namely prisoner rehabilitation. Moreover, involving research as another level to this project is vital to understanding the effectiveness of this jail-based program, in addition to accurately investigating the experiences of participating students. This article not only examines the process of designing and developing a unique civic engagement experience for students, but discusses how four agencies were brought together as community partners to serve female prisoners, while simultaneously conducting research on an important criminal justice intervention.

Background and Rationale

Introduction: Why This Program Was Needed

Within three years of release, 67% of prisoners in the United States will recidivate (Durose, Cooper, & Sydner, 2014). In a 2006 secondary data analysis of Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) recidivism data, 60% of female offenders are rearrested after release, 40% have new convictions, and 30% return to prison (Deschenes, Owen, & Crow, 2006). According to this report, women with violent crimes are not likely to reoffend but women with nonviolent crimes, who comprise the majority of female prisoners and who will be released into the community after shorter periods of incarceration, are more likely to reoffend when compared to their violent crime counterparts. Overall, incarcerated women face many challenges upon release (for example, access to housing, employment, child care, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, medical care, and transportation), which makes it difficult to overcome structural issues (e.g., poverty, racism, classism, sexism), for which they have little control (Belknap, Lynch, & DeHart, 2016). Most incarcerated women are non-white, unmarried, and have children. They have a history of unemployment, abuse, and mental health disorders (73% of female prisoners compared to 55% of male prisoners), and they are more likely than men to be arrested for nonviolent crimes (Haywood, Goldman, Kravitz, & Freeman, 2000; James & Glaze, 2006). These women need to be the primary focus of rehabilitative and reintegrative policy.

Disruption to the mother-child bond as a result of incarceration is devastating for mother and child alike. Most significantly, their children suffer from a myriad of issues, including depression, social exclusion, family instability, anxiety, substance use, early criminality, conduct disorder, antisocial behavior, poor educational attainment, educational underperformance, school failure, mental health issues, limited future income, physical ailments, and unhealthy intimate relationships (Aaron & Dallaire, 2010; Christain, 2009; Mears & Siennick, 2015; Miller & Barnes, 2015). With 70% of incarcerated women responsible for a minor child, 1.7 million children are affected by having a mother behind bars (Maruschak, Glaze, & Mumola, 2010). Children of color are disproportionately affected. They are seven and a half times more likely than white children to have a parent in prison, and Latino children are more than two and a half times more likely than white children to have a parent in prison (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). Children of an incarcerated parent are also six times more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system, further affecting communities of color (Purvis, 2013).

It is clear that jail-based women need programming more than any other correctional group. Due to the smaller numbers of female prisoners, programs are more likely to be piloted with male prisoners (Clark, 2009; Lahm, 2000). Because of their shorter periods of incarceration, and hence quicker return to the community, interventions that help them but also have the ability to impact their children are essential.

With all of these factors in mind, a parenting program for jail-based women was designed, implemented, and evaluated. Without programs in place to rebuild connections and enhance parenting skills, the children of these mothers are likely to repeat the mistakes of their mothers (see Purvis 2013).

To inspire future criminal justice workers, a civic engagement component was integrated into this jail-based program. Undergraduate university students enrolled in the professor's civic engagement/service-learning corrections course serve as teaching assistants during the jail-based parenting classes to help coordinate and instruct group activities. It is highly important to expose students to experiences in the corrections setting as corrections is a neglected field in criminal justice and one of the least preferred career choices of criminal justice students (Collica-Cox & Furst, 2019; Courtright & Mackey, 2004; Kelly, 2015; Krimmel & Tartaro, 1999). Interestingly, non-majors express interest in this course and even though they might not be interested in pursuing a career in criminal justice (e.g., film majors, business majors), they are interested in learning about and working with corrections populations, a topic often mysterious to many.

The average citizen, like the average criminal justice student, does not possess a true understanding of the inner workings of the corrections system (Dowler, 2003). Corrections knowledge appears to be based upon movies, television shows, or media reports, which often inadequately portray the jail and prison subculture (Collica-Cox & Furst, 2019). The only way one can truly understand the inner workings of the system is by immersing one's self in the environment, which is what these students are able to do through Parenting, Prison, & Pups (PPP). This paper discusses the major components of PPP and program implementation within the corrections setting, as well as the benefits and challenges of designing this type of civic engagement course for undergraduate students, which is inclusive of a research component.

Civic Engagement

Service-learning courses prepare students to become socially responsible and some encourage political and social participation within the community (Ferraiolo, 2004; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993). They help students achieve personal growth through reflection (Sanders, Oss, & McGeary, 2015). Such courses are needed more than ever; research shows that the larger public's

interest in civic engagement is dwindling (Brisbin & Hunter, 2003). Civic engagement courses are impactful, valuable, and effective for students (Manikowske & Sunderlin, 2013). Students who participate in service-learning are more likely than other students to become involved in civic engagement activities and they are more likely to commit to participating in future civic engagement activities (Knapp, Fisher, & Levesque-Bristol, 2010; O'Leary, 2014), even after graduation (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999). Besides establishing strong connections between theoretical foundations of knowledge and practical applications, students achieve résumé experience, which can make them more competitive when applying for employment.

The Current Civic Engagement Course

Students who enroll in Strategies to Corrections Administration, a 300-level course, have the opportunity to study and practice innovative approaches to criminal justice administration in a corrections environment. They are able to work in a challenging, yet rewarding field. The nature of this work often makes it difficult to obtain approval for students to work directly with prisoners. Students are exposed to working in the field of corrections with a population that is highly disadvantaged and greatly underserved. As previously stated, corrections is a neglected field in criminal justice and one of the least preferred career choices of criminal justice students. This course exposes them to an undervalued career that is grounded in service but a career that also offers excellent pay and benefits, including in retirement. The students learn the importance of not only building community, but also becoming an integral component of that community. Learning takes place both inside and outside of the classroom. Students have the rare opportunity to share this unique learning experience with one another. The diversity and background of the student body is fairly reflective of the background of the population this program will serve. Our students are primarily comprised of first-generation college students. Of the 28 students participating in the first two civic engagement classes, 36% (n=10) are persons of color. Female prisoners are exposed to others who are similar to them but made different choices. They can see that different choices lead to different paths, allowing these students to serve as role models.

During the regularly scheduled class time at Pace University, the professor and students take

time to reflect upon the parenting classes at the jail. Students spend a majority of the semester learning about prisoner rights (or lack thereof) through the examination of major federal court decisions. Students examine how these decisions (for example, decisions related to health care, religion, privacy, etc.) impact the management of a corrections facility. Programs like PPP are discussed as a management tool to increase prosocial behavior and improve institutional and post-release conduct. Considerable time is spent examining a model of intersectionality, which not only highlights gender differences but examines racial and economic disparities within our criminal justice system. Recent statistics show that while men's incarceration rates have remained stable, women's rates have increased (Minton & Zeng, 2016). Even in states that have experienced an overall decrease in their incarcerated population, men's rates decrease at a higher rate than women's rates (Sawyer, 2018). Regardless of declining incarceration rates in some areas, persons of color are still disproportionately represented in the American criminal justice system with the imprisonment rate for white females (49 per 100,000 white female residents) almost half when compared to the imprisonment rate for black females (96 per 100,000 black female residents) (BJS, 2018). This issue is evident in the first two jail classes, where women of color comprise the majority of PPP's sample. Out of 20 participating women, 65% (n=13) identify as a woman of color.

Student Roles

Pace University has two campuses. One campus, located in Westchester County, is a suburban campus, approximately 30 miles north of upper Manhattan. The other campus is in downtown Manhattan, positioned in the heart of New York City's financial district. During the spring semester, students enrolled in the corrections class in Manhattan work with prisoners at the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC), a federal jail managed by the Bureau of Prisons. Students enrolled in the corrections class in Westchester during the fall semester work with prisoners at the Westchester County Department of Corrections (WCDOC), a county jail in the New York metro area. Students complete 20 service hours outside of the classroom. In addition to service hours, students have academic components that include maintaining a journal and completing a reflection paper at the end of the term.

Since most students are not 21 years of age, they cannot become badged volunteers for either jail; hence, they can only enter each facility up to a maximum of four times in a given calendar year. Since students are not receiving formal training by the jails, they are provided training by the professor, who has over 20 years of experience working in corrections, in how to work effectively in the corrections setting. This training includes information on security protocols, interacting with prisoners, engaging with staff, and so on. Students are never alone with the prisoners and are always closely supervised by the professor during their time in the jail. Students rotate in and out of classes to assist the professor with teaching the classes. Students are instructed in the parenting curriculum, providing them with lifelong parenting skills, and they assist in imparting this knowledge to female prisoners by coordinating and facilitating group activities. In addition, students receive training in Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) and attend an hour-and-a-half AAT training and a one-hour human-canine team training session. Both trainings are provided by The Good Dog Foundation, a nonprofit whose mission "is to ease human suffering and promote recovery from trauma and stress using animal-assisted therapy services that are recognized as among the most innovative and reliable in the United States" (retrieved from <https://www.idealists.org/en/nonprofit/2051c323eaff48078db6a2259a5a6d3e-the-good-dog-foundation-new-york>).

Students also take a field trip to East Jersey State Prison in Rahway and meet with the Lifer's Group, a group of male prisoners serving a minimum of 25 years to life. They have an hour question and answer session with the Lifer's Group, which proves to be one of their most impactful experiences. Since this class is working primarily with jail-based women, this trip exposes them to other corrections populations (e.g., male inmates, prison-based inmates). In order to assess the impact of this type of service-learning experience on participating students, students are asked to complete a pretest and posttest survey. The pretest asks questions regarding demographics, perceptions of prisoners and punishment, career goals, and feelings about civic engagement and involvement in community service. The posttest ascertains students' feelings about the overall course, whether their views on prisoners and punishment changed, and if their career goals and/or their future commitment to civic engagement changed.

The Parenting, Prison, and Pups Program

PPP is based upon Parenting Inside-Out (PIO) (see <http://www.parentinginsideout.org/>), an evidence-based parenting program for female prisoners that incorporates the use of dog-assisted therapy that helps women process their feelings more effectively. To serve these women, and help them to reconnect with their children, PPP involves a partnership between Pace University's two campuses, a nonprofit agency, a federal jail, and a county jail. Employed as a high-impact learning process, this program effectively integrates dogs into a highly structured curriculum for animal-assisted therapy and learning within the jail setting.

Animal-based programming utilized within the corrections setting has promising results (Furst, 2006). AAT has numerous benefits. It reduces stress, lessens anxiety, improves emotional well-being and behavior, decreases depression, enhances communication and reading skills, and lowers blood pressure, heart rate, and perceived feelings of loneliness (Dunlap, 2010). AAT can assist female prisoners with long histories of trauma to mediate the relationship between adults that enables more open and useful communication (Jasperson, 2010). Dogs can facilitate a connection of trust and acceptance (Brazier, 2014); they facilitate a secure environment (Silcox, Castillo, & Reed, 2014), which in jail/prison can be difficult to achieve. Dogs also provide a source of affection (Silcox et al., 2014) which, because of the prisoner's separation from family, has been lacking. Dogs are essentially non-judgmental and loving (Cusack, 1988); one can tell them anything without fear of rejection. Based on preliminary data, the presence of dogs suggests similar health benefits for students enrolled in this course. Students are given a posttest questionnaire on the last day of class about their experiences in PPP. All participating students thus far (n=28) say the presence of the dogs makes them feel happy, safe, and comfortable. For example:

Dogs are awesome and I will take any reason to be with them, so a class with dogs is the best [They make me feel] safer. Dogs kept me calm. They were good assistant teachers (20-year-old male student, Westchester Campus).

For PPP, an established evidence-based parenting curriculum PIO was chosen. Previous research finds that PIO participation among Oregon State prisoners decreases depression,

lowers substance abuse, increases parental participation, enhances parenting skills, reduces parental stress, and reduces recidivism (Parenting Inside-Out, 2015). Utilizing an evidence-based curriculum as the foundation for this program was important, especially when the program was presented to potential community partners. Unlike other parenting programs, this one incorporates cognitive behavior skills, it is outcome based, and its design is learner-centered (Eddy & Clark, 2010). The curriculum is enhanced and topics are augmented to include AAT. The professor is trained and certified in PIO. Additionally, Pace University is licensed by PIO to allow her to provide this parenting program for female prisoners.

In view of the transitional nature of the jail environment, PPP must be provided at least two times per week in order to maximize the number of prisoner program completers. Since one's length of stay in the jail can be relatively short, it is clear that extended programs run the risk of losing a majority of the participants. This condensed schedule actually works well during the course of an academic semester because the professor has time to bond with and train students prior to beginning the jail program and there are a few weeks remaining in the semester after the conclusion of the last jail parenting class to process and reflect upon their experiences.

Each parenting class is approximately two hours and includes the following topics: Parenting styles, effective speaking skills, effective listening skills, effective problem-solving, bonding through play and reading, the child's job and the parent's job, directions and encouragement, and time out with back-up privilege removal; also, rules, rewards, and consequences; yoga, meditation, and stress management; cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR); first aid and automated external defibrillator (AED); home and children; healthy adult relationships; and the reunification/graduation day.

To provide the CPR certification, the professor formulated a limited liability company that became an American Safety and Health Institute training center. She and two volunteer instructors provide a full-day training to certify the students and prisoners in CPR (for adults, children, and infants), first aid, and AED. The women prisoners and the students are nationally certified for two years. This is an important component to the partnering facilities because prisoners can use this certification to augment their résumés. The last parenting class, the reunification and graduation day, celebrates

those prisoners who complete the parenting course. The families of the prisoner participants are invited to the jail for a graduation ceremony. The college students get involved by decorating, coordinating activities for the children, and talking with the family members. Food is served, which is generously provided by both facilities, and regular visiting rules are suspended, which allows women to have complete physical contact with their children. Two reunification and graduation days have taken place thus far and the students really enjoy it. One student said it gave the prisoners “a sense of accomplishment and pride.” It is satisfying for the students to see the prisoners receive their certificates and know that their hard work and commitment to the program is worthwhile. This course inspires some of the students to become more civically engaged. As one student said:

This course has truly shifted my views on rehabilitation and I feel I am leaving this class a better person. I loved every minute of this and wish I could take it again. I am planning to pursue more volunteer work (18-year-old female student, NYC Campus).

Students learn that giving of oneself can really make a positive difference in the lives of others. Two examples:

This experience really lit a fire in me to give back. More people should do things like this. I hate when people complain about matters such as crime and jails/prisons, but do nothing to learn about them. Don't complain unless you offer help. Also, overall I have been inspired by how much a few hours of civic engagement can really affect others (19-year-old female student, NYC Campus).

This was a class on humanity as much as civic engagement or criminal justice. We got to see a population that is looked down upon, stigmatized, and ridiculed, but hearing them really hit me in the heart (20-year-old male student, Westchester Campus).

PPP began with PIO but not with AAT (the parenting class without the therapy dogs) at both facilities. It was important to wait to fully integrate

the dogs into the program for several reasons: 1) It allowed the professor to become more familiar with the parenting curriculum and solve any operational problems (e.g., clearances, space); 2) it allowed the students to have input regarding whether the class design and implementation is successful; students are also able to propose suggestions for improvement; 3) it provides baseline data to compare whether there are enhanced effects by augmenting the curriculum with AAT; and 4) it gives The Good Dog Foundation, PPP's nonprofit partner, a greater opportunity to understand how the dogs could be most effectively utilized.

To assure the safety of the dogs and optimize integration of AAT, The Good Dog Foundation recruits licensed mental health professionals who have dogs. Eight mental health professional-handler/dog teams are trained and certified by Good Dog, undergoing an intensive six week training program; they receive additional training from the professor in the parenting curriculum and in working effectively in the corrections setting. They also receive a formal volunteer training by the respective jail. Four teams are chosen for each jail location. This part of the program began in February 2018. Data collection continues.

Building Community Partnerships

In order to provide this unique experience for college students, the professor held numerous meetings with community stakeholders to present the idea and to discuss security concerns, as well as program logistics. The professor, who has 20 years of experience working with incarcerated populations, has established working relationships with both corrections facilities prior to PPP's implementation. She worked with them to discern programmatic needs and wants. There was a two-year development and implementation process. At the end of this process, a strong working relationship had developed among the partners.

Program Benefits

PPP has the ability to significantly benefit these community partners. Anticipated benefits were presented to PPP's community partners during the program development stage.

PPP's university partner. The program benefits Pace University students by providing an opportunity they would not otherwise have. As one student commented:

Beyond the fact that I really enjoyed this class, I never would have thought about or probably had the opportunity to work in the environment that we did (22-year-old female student, Westchester Campus).

All program participants (n=28) stated that they enjoyed taking this class as a civic engagement course and they enjoy the service they provide. According to one:

I learned more than I believe I could have in a book or class and found the overall knowledge and experience irreplaceable (25-year-old student, NYC Campus).

Twenty-nine percent are now considering corrections as a career, and 46% said they would consider working in a jail/prison as a result of their experience with PPP. According to a 21-year-old female student from the Westchester Campus:

This class opened my eyes to so many job opportunities and hands-on experience.

By being a part of this program, students can gain multiple benefits:

1. They have the opportunity to work with an underserved population, while also engaging with several community partners.

2. They can develop parenting skills and strategies to utilize in their own lives; while witnessing parenting in action and volunteering their time to support prisoner parenting goals, they are learning social responsibility.

3. They not only understand the myriad of issues faced by corrections populations but also learn to care about this population and their surrounding communities, particularly when/if they enter the field as criminal justice professionals.

4. They can identify what they expect from the course at its onset and reflect upon their experiences working in the corrections setting upon course completion.

5. They can develop active learning skills through practice and experience; they develop the ability to multitask, sharpen analytical skills, and address their own feelings regarding those who break the law.

This program is well received by the students, creating a registration wait list each semester. As a result, it appears, according to two students, to be a good recruitment and retention tool:

I would recommend this class to students who don't even attend Pace University (22-year-old female student, Westchester Campus).

This was definitely one of the best classes I've taken at Pace University, and it was very rewarding (21-year-old female student, NYC Campus).

PPP's nonprofit-based partner. PPP benefits The Good Dog Foundation by allowing it to reach a new population. The Foundation is interested in providing service to incarcerated populations. This new opportunity widens its service base and allows it to gain expertise working in a new field. With the research component, Good Dog has additional empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of its methods, which is important for its funders.

PPP's government partners. PPP benefits MCC and WCDOC by providing a free and valuable service for their prisoners. Corrections facilities are under pressure from the Department of Justice to focus on rehabilitative and re-entry initiatives, yet, they routinely lack money and staff to provide such programming on their own. This project, which is free to both jail facilities, helps them to meet that goal. Nationally, female prisoners, because they are smaller in number than their male counterparts, suffer from a paucity of programs, especially in the jail setting. This course provides female prisoners with a valuable resource to help enhance their parenting skills and such skills will benefit their children. The course focuses on soft skills, such as communication skills, which are also important to employers. Inmates are certified in CPR, first aid and AED, which is another valuable asset for potential employment. Furthermore, the presence of dogs appears to enhance staff morale. Although not a direct goal of PPP, it is a noticeable effect.

Research and Assessment

The Development

The implementation and development of PPP is a two-year process primarily because of the addition of the research component. Planning and implementing the program portion would take less than one year. However, it is clear that for sustainability, funding is required, and in order to apply for funding, data is needed. By including a research component, credibility is provided to PPP

and the Pace students are able to see and understand how this process works as well. One undergraduate student is able to serve as a research assistant to the professor each semester. A benefit to faculty, who want to include a research component, is that a program design like PPP is the pinnacle of academics—it combines teaching, research and service. There is the additional benefit of mentoring students academically and professionally. Two research projects developed from PPP. One involves prisoner mothers and one involves participating college students. The process of obtaining permission to conduct research with prisoners is a long process requiring three IRB approvals (e.g., Pace University and the two respective jails), rather than one. Permission to conduct research with the students participating in this program required a fourth IRB approval, which was submitted through Pace's IRB.

A pretest and posttest quasi-experimental design is utilized to evaluate the differences between prisoners who complete the two-month parenting course with AAT, with a group who complete the same course without AAT. It is important to run both groups first at each facility without the dogs in order to determine the best way to integrate the dogs. Besides the professor and her students being present for these parenting classes, a representative from The Good Dog Foundation attends every jail class.

Administration of the Survey

Each facility helps to recruit prisoners for PPP. Prisoner participation is voluntary and women are recruited by the jail's education staff. Requirements for participation include having at least two months of time remaining on one's sentence (which is difficult to guarantee in a jail setting) and a child or grandchild 24 years of age and under where the prisoner serves as the child's primary caregiver. Although not always accurate, staff is more likely to know if a prisoner will be incarcerated for the duration of the program; prisoners are often unclear about their release date or may not be honest about their release date. Fourteen prisoners began the PPP class at MCC, with 10 completing. In WCDoc, 14 prisoners began the PPP class, with 11 completing. Some of these women are unable to complete because they are either transferred to another facility or they are released. All prisoner participants are interviewed before the start of the program and all remaining participants are interviewed again at the conclusion of the program.

Pretest and posttest data, inclusive of scales measuring levels of stress, anxiety, depression (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965), among the prisoners are collected via one-on-one interviews with the PI of the project. Interviews, which can last 30 minutes to an hour (depending on the length of the women's answers), are conducted with the women at their respective jails in a confidential setting. Open-ended questions measure the level of contact/involvement with children, confidence in parenting (Berry & Jones, 1995; Korjenevitch, Dunifon, & Kopko, 2010; Kramer & McDonnell, 2016; Parenting Inside-Out, 2015), and overall feelings regarding the implementation of AAT within the course. Interview questions examine disciplinary rates. The Human-Animal Interaction Scale (HAIS) is used to measure the level of human-animal interaction following each AAT session (Fournier, Letson, & Berry, 2016). A comparison of both groups determines the effect of AAT on promoting engagement and retention, key elements of the learning process. The first classes without AAT took place during the 2017 academic year and the classes with AAT began during the 2018 academic year. The only differences between the classes is the presence of the canine teams; all other factors remain constant. However, in the group without AAT, after posttest data collection, the women prisoners are surprised with an AAT visit.

Student Assessment

In order to assess the impact of this type of service-learning on students, students are also asked to complete a pretest and posttest survey utilizing both qualitative and quantitative measures. The pretest asks questions regarding demographics, perceptions of prisoners and punishment, career goals, feelings about civic engagement and involvement in community service. The posttest ascertains students' feelings about the overall course, whether their views on prisoners and punishment changed, and if their career goals and/or their future commitment to civic engagement changed. Many of the questions regarding civic engagement are borrowed from a questionnaire utilized by Pace University's Center for Community Action and Research. They previously used these questions to understand the experience of Pace students who enroll in civic engagement courses. By utilizing a modified version of this pretest and posttest questionnaire, the professor can evaluate whether students who participate in this jail-based

service-learning course are likely to modify their views regarding prisoners, punishment and civic engagement, after completion of this course. It is hypothesized that these students will commit to future civic engagement. The only students included in the study are students who register for Strategies in Corrections Administration. So far, 28 students from both campuses have participated; 15 from the NYC Campus and 13 from the Westchester Campus. Data collection is ongoing. There is the opportunity to see if outcome measures change after full integration of the dogs into the program.

Challenges

Flexibility and Patience

Besides the lengthy approval process, there are and continue to be several challenges to the administration of PPP. None of these disadvantages, however, outweigh the benefits of the program. Students must remain flexible and have a great deal of patience. Security issues may require moving participants from one area to another during class or may prevent PPP staff from entering the facility on a given day/night. Students understand that although the parenting class is two hours, the actual time involved in administering the class is approximately three hours. Clearing security, missing gate clearances (these are needed to allow the students entrance), a delayed count (prisoners are counted several times per day and no one enters or leaves the facility during this time), lockdowns, etc., can all add to the required time. Class may also be slightly chaotic at times as prisoners may be called in and out of class for medication, lawyer's visits, etc. Students serve as another set of eyes for the professor and should be alert during the parenting classes. After each class, the participating students on that day and the professor debrief and they debrief a second time with the entire class. Concerns regarding prisoners or operational procedures can be discussed at that time. Students can also reflect on challenges or progress, or students can address their own emotional concerns. For example, one student shared with the prisoners about her two brothers who suffer from heroin addiction. She received tremendous support from the prisoners and her fellow students. In another class, students and the professor received an unpleasant lesson when one of the prisoner mothers was released a month early (often they are released directly from court). Without a plan in place (her plan was for the following month), she connected with a former boyfriend and overdosed. Participants learned of

her death in the middle of one of the parenting classes. The professor allowed the prisoners and the students to process the news. Surprisingly, both the prisoners and students wanted to continue with the remainder of the class. Such experiences, albeit highly unpleasant, provide students with a realistic view of the criminal justice system and give them the opportunity to assess whether it is the right career path for them.

Professionalism

Students must be professional and should receive an orientation prior to working in the facility. Since they are not badged volunteers, they do not receive a formal orientation from the jails; this responsibility is left to the professor. If the professor fails to properly orient the students, the students may do something, unknowingly, that jeopardizes the entire program (e.g., giving an inmate a certain type of pen or a piece of gum, both of which are contraband). Students have to dress professionally, be on time, and not interfere with staff as they are performing their duties. Nothing can be given to prisoners at any time; students cannot bring anything into the facility. All of the items brought for class require prior approval and a gate clearance. All of these items must be counted and taken with the professor and her students when they leave. Students are typically nervous for their first class but after the first class are excited to be there and understand how to best interact with the prisoners. The professor never leaves the students alone with the prisoners and there is always a corrections officer in close proximity.

Organization

Organizing this course can be challenging for both the students and the professor. The most difficult and time-consuming portion is developing an idea that the students could feel passionately about. The "idea" sets the tone for the entire experience and if the students enjoy the service they are providing, it will help them to overcome the challenges they may face. If students do not feel positive about the service they are providing, it could be difficult getting them to consistently commit to their days and hours, which could negatively affect the program. The students are integral to PPP. Prisoners are often asked to break into smaller groups to complete assignments. The students are paired with the groups and help to keep groups on task. Their presence alleviates any issues regarding literacy because, if needed, the students can take charge of reading and writing for

the group. In one of the classes a bilingual student was instrumental in translating some of the more difficult concepts to a prisoner who had Spanish as her primary language.

One of the challenges students face is time management. The students will need to manage their time wisely in order to complete the required 20 hours of service. The professor will have to organize his/her schedule as well because this is equivalent to teaching another course. Organization is also involved in collecting all of the background forms and having them processed, compiling a list of items and gaining approval for those items (all which are necessary to properly conduct the parenting classes), making schedules for which students are attending the jail on which days, etc. All of these things must be done prior to the start of classes. Since the students also visit East Jersey State Prison, background forms and clearances must be collected and processed for both facilities. Once students commit to attending a class, they cannot change or switch with another student. If there is an issue, such as a student is sick, they miss the jail class and the student and the professor have to devise an alternative activity to make up the missed service hours. Many students appear to lack motivation initially (e.g., they did not want to wake up early or attend a night class) but after attending their first parenting class, the majority of the students complained that they wanted more time in the jail. One student, who was forced to miss a jail class because of a sports-related concussion, tried to convince her athletic trainer and the professor to allow her to attend. Her medical issues prevented her attendance and she was visibly and verbally upset about her inability to go to the jail.

Transportation

Students have to be able to easily get from campus to the jail and vice versa. Both jail facilities are close to the respective campuses, which was a strong consideration when developing PPP. Transporting students is more of an issue at Pace's suburban campus, where public transportation is not as easily accessible. In Manhattan, the students and the professor meet at her office and walk as a group to the federal jail. It is approximately a 10-minute walk, which makes transporting students easy. In Westchester, most students do not have their own cars. Driving students becomes a challenge and walking is not an option. Even though the jail is five miles from campus, the professor is primarily responsible for their transportation. She has to arrive at campus early and can only transport a

certain number of students at any given time. Luckily, some students drive and can assist with carpooling on certain days/nights.

Funding

The professor applies for internal grants, the receipt of which allows her to provide amenities for the students, such as food for the day of the three-hour Good Dog training. A graduation celebration for the students is also held, with food, at the end of the semester; all students receive certificates of service and internal grants help to fund this portion. Internal grants are also used to purchase supplies for the program and to pay for transportation for the field trip. The bigger funding issue is the money needed for PPP's community partner to train and pay the therapy teams. The professor was finally able to secure outside funding, which covers such costs for the next two years. Ample time must be taken to identify and apply for funding opportunities. This can be challenging to a professor who is simultaneously trying to develop and implement a program, in addition to data collection. The professor is still in the process of submitting additional funding applications.

Discussion

According to Noddings (2005), one of an educator's jobs is to teach the students how to care. Students cannot care about the "other" if they do not know the "other." Prisoners can be characterized as the "other." A closed system, far from the eye of the public, they are a population locked behind a fortress-like wall, often forgotten, and rarely cared for by the general community. This service-learning project puts students in touch with the "other" and helps them to learn that caring about these forgotten persons subsequently allows them to care for their own communities. PPP participation can form the basis for good citizenship, even if one is not a criminal justice major. This course creates a moment of connection. If this type of service-learning course proves to be effective, it will continue to serve students on both campuses and can prove to be an excellent admissions and retention tool for universities and/or departments. For faculty, projects such as PPP combine teaching, research and service, the three areas required for tenure and promotion.

Projects like PPP provide a unique educational experience for college students. Students who participate in this program are all positive about their service and many are considering corrections as a possible career. It is an experience that can

prove to be impactful and transformative for all involved partners, but most importantly, the students. Creating programs like this can be time consuming for faculty but create an opportunity to rejuvenate a love of teaching, especially when there are so many perceived benefits for so many people. Not only are students civically engaged, faculty are as well.

Most importantly, while working in community-based settings, it is important to be responsive to the specific context of the community being served, in addition to the needs of the collaborating community partners. A program is strengthened when multiple approaches are integrated (PIO and AAT) to address an important community-identified issue. Educators interested in providing similar programming need to be open and flexible to approaching this work from multiple perspectives in order to be effective. Strong partnerships, coupled with dedicated participants, are likely to have a positive impact on all involved.

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