

**Proposal for an AALAC Collaborative Workshop:
Engaging College Communities In and Beyond Prison Education
Academic Year 2016-2017**

This proposal builds on AALAC colleges' on-going engagement with community partnerships for social justice: we seek, in particular, to support faculty, staff, students, and alumni in working with prison and post-prison education, critical aspects of creating a more just and equitable society.

In 2014, Vassar hosted the AALAC-funded workshop "Prison Education and a Liberal Arts Curriculum," in which college faculty joined prison administrators, program directors, and alumni to review models for programs, learn strategies for overcoming barriers, and share advice on securing institutional support. Having identified several areas for continued collaboration, we now propose a 2 ½-day workshop, to be held at Bryn Mawr or Haverford College in Summer 2017, in order to 1) refine our pedagogical strategies for teaching in prison, and 2) re-envision prison education as part of a larger educational and political project, including post-incarceration and re-entry programs. We will invite AALAC faculty to join several guest speakers, others in the Philadelphia area who do reentry or criminal justice advocacy work, and alumni of Philadelphia prison education programs to explore ways to enhance curricular, co-curricular, and post-curricular opportunities.

Workshop Plan

Friday afternoon arrival and evening plenary.

Two Saturday sessions on effective critical pedagogy in prison

We will work in small groups, either on-line or in person, with alumni of Philadelphia prison education programs, to review methods, materials, assignments and syllabi for courses that are about, or take place inside, carceral and transitional settings. We will discuss successes and pitfalls, issues and strategies, as we develop new techniques and materials in which we

- examine language and framing (for example: challenge the inside/outside binary);
- address positionalities of participants (for example: race, gender, class, ability, age, being incarcerated or not);
- cultivate participants' ability to speak from lived experiences and theorize beyond them;
- develop collaborative projects (for example, a set of closely related syllabi, using shared themes, texts, and/or assignments; and a research project that documents, compares and reflects on prison courses).

Two Sunday sessions focusing on campus-community partnerships in moving beyond prison education

Our morning session will employ a design thinking method to brainstorm projects that might bring our academic tools and skills to address the needs of community partners, and model how to develop such projects. Others in the Philadelphia area who do reentry or criminal justice advocacy work, which already have strong connections with the Bi-college community, will join us in developing mutually beneficial projects, as we explore together what academic tools would be most helpful in meeting organizational needs.

Our concluding session will focus on planning collaborative projects across the AALAC colleges doing prison and post-prison education work, a strategy for fundraising recommended by administrators during the Vassar workshop. Another long-term goal is to enrich the learning and contributions of college students after graduation, so that they may continue to engage in meaningful, ongoing efforts for change. A website for sharing resources is in place from our 2014 workshop, and will be replenished as an online site for moving forward. Evaluation forms will be distributed at the close of the workshop.

Workshop liaison: Jody Cohen, Bryn Mawr and Haverford College Education Program

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Workshop planners:

Kristin Bumiller (Political Science), Amherst College

Susan Castagnetto (Philosophy), Scripps College

Anne Dalke (English and Gender Studies), Bryn Mawr College

Kristin Lindgren (Health Studies and Writing Center), Haverford College

Janice Lion (Center for Peace & Global Citizenship), Haverford College

Mary L. Shanley (Political Science and Women's Studies), Vassar College