

## Inmate Education – Talking Points

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1. SB 1391 – signed by the Governor on September 27, 2014 and establishes law concerning Community Colleges and Inmate Education Programs. SB-1391 directs interagency agreement between the CDCR and CCCC to expand inmate access to college courses and waives the open course provisions in statute and authorizes apportionments for these students.
2. On November 5<sup>th</sup>, Sonya and I met with state leadership from the California Department of Corrections and California Community Colleges Board of Governors. Senior leadership from Kern Valley State Prison (KVSP) also attended. We discussed the impact of SB 1391; agreed the climate was right for Bakersfield College to start offering courses at the prison; and decided to start something small in our Spring Semester. BC President will establish a team to include CCA, CSEA, Academic Senate, Management Association, VP of Finance, and others to discuss strategies and impact in inmate education.
3. There are three prisons in the Bakersfield College, Delano Campus area of responsibility. These prisons house over 12,000 inmates and average 150 percent of their design capacity. We started with Kern Valley State Prison (KVSP) in Spring 2015. KVSP houses 3,720 inmates and is 152 percent of design capacity.
4. On November 20, a BC team of administrators and faculty (instructor and counselors) toured KVSP and met with the Assistant Warden and Kern Valley Adult School vice Principals. Our discussions and tour included: information about prospective students the prison determined ready to matriculate; assessment processes both short term and long term; prison life to include security measures; classrooms and living facilities; student support activities to include tutoring and advisement; BC instructor training and orientation; course materials to include textbooks and consumables; and the agreed start in our spring semester. Based on the information from our meetings, we scheduled the pilot course that began Spring 2015 and the students were selected by prison officials based on behavior record, projected parole date, and potential for success based on input from Correction Officers. The pilot course is a COMM B1 – Public Speaking and has 27 students enrolled. The pilot course is helping us gain insight into: how to operate in these facilities; the prison culture and the inmate student; and the safety and security of our BC faculty and staff.
5. The agreement with Kern Valley State Prison is being processed and will indemnify and hold harmless each partner except in the case of negligence. The prisons will take all measures necessary to ensure that KCCD/BC employees assigned shall have a safe working environment and provide training necessary for KCCD/BC employees to safely perform their duties while at prison facilities. Pat Smith is our faculty lead and will develop an orientation for newly assigned faculty.
6. Inmates can request a BOG waiver. Inmates are responsible for text books and materials. Most inmates cannot afford the cost of books and this creates a challenge. Inmates can receive EOPS services...book vouchers, educational planning, etc. The only catch is they have to be full-time (12 units) the first semester and after the first semester they need to be enrolled in a minimum of 6 units.
7. Electronic readers are being purchased by CDCR and will be available this fall. The CDCR Superintendent of Correctional Education is relying on recently enacted SB 1052 and SB 1053. These initiatives provide for free, on-line, openly licensed digital textbooks for the 50 most popular lower-division college courses offered by California colleges.
8. State officials are redirecting state funding to reduce recidivism rates, and this includes bringing higher education to inmates. BC Delano Campus could become a national model for prison educational reform; however it will require resources to have a Bakersfield College program that leads to a degree having value for these students.

9. External funding agencies like the Macarthur Foundation, as well as the Ford Foundation, are funding exploratory grants for regional consortium groups that develop collaborative programs to reduce the prison population. Today, California prisons partner with colleges that rely on correspondence type courses. We must learn from other model programs like Bard College's prison initiative in New York.