2019 NEH Summer Seminar

"They call it culture": Problems in the Encounter between College and Prison

July 1-July 17, 2019
SUNY Potsdam

Seminar Leader:
Daniel Karpowitz, J.D.
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Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Studies
Bard College

Applications Due by March 5, 2019
to
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2019 NEH Summer Seminar:
"They call it culture”:
Problems in the Encounter between College and Prison

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In this seminar, we will critically consider contemporary programs to bring undergraduate colleges inside prisons against the broader social landscape of contemporary American inequality. We will look at inequality from the aspect of both mass incarceration on the one hand, and educational hierarchy on the other. Formerly incarcerated persons are encouraged to apply. We will seek to be both critical and normative, as some of us will be committed practitioners of the work of college in prison, but also keenly aware of its problems, perhaps drawing some inspiration from the lines in Tacitus's Agricola describing the colonial project of liberal arts instruction under the Roman Empire: "humanitas vocabatur . . . they call it culture, but it is in fact their servitude."

Among our goals will be to interrogate these interventions into these landscapes by way of a discussion of some key terms: some of these come from the world of political rhetoric and criminal justice policy that typically explain the purpose of such "programs," terms like recidivism and rehabilitation. Still others come from liberal advocacy on behalf of both the liberal arts college and its contemporary purposes, such as "cultivating humanity" and "liberating minds." Other key words are drawn from more radical approaches, which envision college, and its presence in prisons, as an avenue to "true freedom," to sites for the practice of "pedagogies of the oppressed," or as occasions for projects involving critical race theory in education, or somewhat different socialist critiques of meritocracy.

The seminar will conclude with a strong practical interest in the recent attempts to rebuild public structures for college in prison, through a range of federal initiatives, state-level legislation, and acts of private philanthropy. A critical assessment of existing models will conclude with a collaborative discussion of a new state model currently in its formative stages, being developed within the executive branch in a midwestern state. Participants in the seminar will all be asked to engage creatively with this emerging model, and, importantly, to present formally on their own work and experience as teachers, formerly incarcerated students, activists, administrators, or scholars.

8 Sessions, each with a morning and afternoon session, meeting July 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17.
Week 1
Day 1: Introductions

Morning
- "Introduction" and "Getting In: Conflicting Voices and The Politics of College in Prison (Karpowitz)

Afternoon
- A short history of college in prison, manuscript (Marcus Kenner)
- Introductions from all Participants introducing briefly their own related teaching, research, and key questions to explore for the seminar

Day 2: Purposes

Morning
- "Racism, the Language of Reduced Recidivism, Higher Education in Prison: Toward anti-racist praxis" (Erin Castro), "Caught Somewhere Between" (James Davis), and "The Elevanting Connection: The Incarcerated Students Experience" (David Evans). All from "Radical Departures: Ruminations on the Purposes of Higher Education in Prison" Critical Education Guest Editors: Erin L. Castro & Mary Rachel Gould (2018)


Afternoon
- "Going to Class: Reading Crime and Punishment" (Karpowitz, Ch. 3)

Day 3: Purposes, continued

Morning
- Tacitus, Selection from Agricola & Emmolit mores - - -
- [https://www.pinterest.com/pin/381187555930937838/] "Emollit mores nec sinit esse feros: 'Learning humanizes the character and does not permit it to be cruel'."


Afternoon  
*College in Prison*, Ch. 4 "Figures of Speech"

**Week 2**  
**Day 4: Structures of inequality -- Mass incarceration**

**Morning**  
- *Punishment and Inequality in America*, (selection) Bruce Western, (Russell Sage 2006)  

**Afternoon**  
- "Landscapes: BPI and Mass Incarceration" (Karpowitz)

**Day 5: Structures of inequality -- Higher education**

**Morning**  
  - "Going to Class: Reading *Crime & Punishment*" (Karpowitz)

**Afternoon**  
- *Unequal College in the Age of Disaprity*, (selections) Clottfelter (Harvard 2017)  
- *Degrees of Inequality*, (selections) Suzanne Mettler  
  "The Diverted Dream Revisited" Book Review of *The Diverted Dream*, by Brint and Karabel (Oxford 1989) by Thomas Leitzel (Central Piedmont CC) and Darryl Clowes (Virginia Tech), *Catalyst* Vol. XXIV No.1, 1994  
  - "College Match and Undermatch: Assessing Student Preferences, College Proximity, and Inquality in Post-College Outcomes", Kolagrides and Delaney (*manuscript*, 2018)

**Day 6: Interrogating Merit**

**Morning**


**Afternoon**

Participant presentations, 1 & 2

**Week 3**

**Day 7: Progressive models?**

**Morning**

Minnesota: A Model for "One Minnesota"?

&

New Jersey (NJ STEP and NJ Senate Bill - 2055))

Washington State (WA SB - 6059)

California (SB - 1391) and "Degrees of Freedom" *University of California* (2015)

**Afternoon**

Participant presentations, 3 & 4

**Day 8: Concluding discussions**

**Morning**

"Replication and Conclusions: College, Prison and Inequality in America" (Karpowitz)

**Afternoon**

Participant Presentations, 3 & 4

*In the final gatherings, members of the seminar will be asked to engage in a creative discussion on the draft model for Minnesota, and to present formally on their own work and experience as teachers, formerly incarcerated students, activists and administrators, or scholars.*
APPLICATION
SUNY Potsdam NEH Faculty Development Program
Summer Seminar for Faculty

Our summer seminar is offered to faculty of the Associated Colleges of the St. Lawrence Valley (SUNY Potsdam, Clarkson University, St. Lawrence University, and SUNY Canton). The seminars provide area faculty with a valuable opportunity to enrich their knowledge of the subjects that they teach and research by working with distinguished outside experts, by studying alongside other instructors and scholars, and by undertaking individual projects of their own design.

There are up to eight participants selected for each seminar. Through research, reflection, and discussion with the seminar director and with other seminar members, participants have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of their field and improve their ability to convey that understanding to others. Participants are expected to take part fully in the work of the seminar and to complete all seminar projects.

Although writing may be encouraged by seminar directors, lengthy papers typical of graduate courses are not required. Seminar topics are broad enough to accommodate a wide range of interests. The topics allow participants to address significant questions, explore major texts, and extend their thinking beyond disciplinary concerns.

Eligibility
To be eligible applicants must be members of the faculty of SUNY Potsdam or faculty of one of the Associated Colleges. Faculty members who have participated in previous SUNY Potsdam NEH Seminars are eligible to apply, but preference will be given to those who have not previously participated.

Selection Criteria
The selection committee will review applications and select participants on the basis of (1) applicant’s qualifications to do the work of the seminar and make a contribution to it; (2) the conception and organization of the applicant’s proposed study project in relation to the seminar topic; (3) the potential value of that project to other members of the seminar.

Stipend and Conditions of Award
Individuals selected to participate in the four-week seminar will receive a stipend of $3500 and an allowance of up to $1,000 for purchase of library books and travel related to the seminar project.

Participants are required to attend all seminar sessions and to engage fully in the work of the seminar. During the tenure of the seminar they may not undertake other professional duties that will interfere with their participation in the seminar (in particular, they may not be teaching Summer School in tandem with participating in the seminar).

Immediately following the completion of the seminar, participants will be asked to submit an evaluation. In addition, ten months following the seminar, participants will provide an evaluation of the impact the seminar had on their profession development with particulars about papers given, scholarship published, and curricula projects implemented as a result of participation in the seminar.

Applications may be submitted by ordinary post to the NEH Program Chair, Professor
APPLICATION MATERIALS

Please assemble your application by drafting the following documents:

1. Application Cover Sheet
   - Applicant's Title and Name
   - Home Address
   - Work Address
   - Email Address
   - Telephone Number (Work/Cell)
   - Major Field of Applicant

2. Description of Objectives
   Applicants must write an essay describing their objectives in applying to the seminar. Close attention should be given to the preparation of the description of objectives because it will be considered carefully by the committee members as they make their selections. This essay should include any relevant personal and academic information. The essay should address reasons for applying to the seminar; the applicant's interest, both academic and personal, in the subject of the seminar, qualifications to do the work of the seminar and to make a contribution to it; what the applicant wants to accomplish in the seminar; and the relation of the seminar to the applicant's professional responsibilities. The descriptive material provided about the seminar should be read carefully because the committee may request that particular information be given in the description of objectives.
   The application essay should be NO MORE THAN three to four double-spaced pages. Be sure to address the following questions in relation to the proposed project:
   a. The specific study, research, or curricular project, including the basic ideas, problems, and questions that are of interest, with a specific concrete plan of investigation and a statement of its rationale.
   b. If the proposed project is part of a long-term undertaking, the present state of the larger undertaking and how the summer project fits in.
   c. The relation of the study to the applicant's immediate and long-range objectives as a teacher and scholar.
   d. Other information relevant to the proposed project.

3. Professional History
   An application must include the professional history form (included below). A C.V. may be attached but will not be accepted in lieu of the professional history.
Professional History Form

1. Applicant’s Name and Institutional Affiliation (include department).

2. Applicant’s Field of Specialization

3. Full Time _______ Part Time _______

4. Number of Years Teaching __________

5. Education (list institutions, dates of attendance, major field and graduate degrees)

6. Graduate Work in field of seminar

7. Teaching/Research interests in field of seminar

8. Sabbatical Leaves or other released time for research or study (specify when, where, and for what purpose)

9. Employment History (give institutions, dates, major responsibilities)
10. Courses Taught during the last two years

11. Academic Awards and Grants (mention any special awards or professional distinctions)

12. Previous SUNY Potsdam NEH Seminars

13. *Most significant* Publications and Professional Activities (This list should be selective and not all inclusive.)