

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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# CM301: Dimensions of Correctional Ministry

Course Lecturer: Karen Swanson, EdD

Director of the Institute for Prison Ministries (IPM), Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College

## Course Description

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Welcome to *Dimensions of Correctional Ministry*, an online undergraduate-level course designed to provide an overview of ministry to offenders and their families and the biblically-based role of the Church in that effort. In addition, the course will examine the basic structure and functions of the criminal justice system and the cultural distinctives that govern it. The primary focus will be on the multiple ministry opportunities present in each of the various phases of the criminal justice system—presentencing, long-term incarceration, and reentry.

All meetings for this course will be conducted online. In terms of academic credit, this is a semester-length course, but it is offered in an intensive 8-week format.

## Course Objectives

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Upon completion of the course, you should be able to do the following:

- Exhibit a passion for those who are spiritually lost and for discipleship.
- Identify personal spiritual gifts and strengths.
- Describe the biblical basis for ministry within the justice system and the historic roots of the Church's efforts in American corrections.
- Define the mission and goals of the various correctional agencies and identify ways to effectively engage in ministry efforts within those settings.
- Identify evidence-based practices used in corrections and criminogenic factors.
- Summarize restorative justice principles and contrast them with current processes within the criminal justice system.
- Identify the crucial junctures at which inmates and their families are most open to ministry and understand which specific ministry strategies are most appropriate for those points of contact.

## Accessibility

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If you have particular accessibility needs, please contact the CUGN Registrar at the beginning of the course. This will allow us to work directly with you to make efforts to accommodate your situation and ensure as full as possible accessibility to the course.

## Course Lecturer

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*Karen Swanson, EdD*

**Education:**

- Northern Illinois University, EdD
- Western Michigan University, MA
- Calvin College, BS
- Cornerstone University, BA

**Teaching Career:**

- Professor of Correctional Ministries, Christian University GlobalNet
- Faculty member, Christian Formation and Ministry Department, Wheaton College

**Other Career Highlights:**

- Director of the Institute for Prison Ministries (IPM), Billy Graham Center for Evangelism at Wheaton College
- Overseer of Charles W. Colson scholarship program at IPM
- Christian Association for Prisoner Aftercare Advisory Board
- Developer, Correctional Ministries courses at Wheaton College and Christian University GlobalNet
- Executive director, LifeHouse Ministries reentry program
- Certified in Justice Ministries, Motivational Interviewing, Moral Reconciliation Therapy, Bridges Out of Poverty, Truthought, and Anger Management
- Volunteer teacher in Life Learning Program, Cook County Jail (Chicago, IL)

## Online Professor

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Dr. Swanson will serve as the online professor for this course. She will be introduced the first week of the course and will guide students through the 8-week study. For the duration of this course, Dr. Swanson will be available to enrolled students by email and, at set times, by chat room or other real-time technology.

The following will be done by the online professor in order to stimulate student involvement and to facilitate effective learning:

- Post discussion questions for the online forum
- Interact with students in all discussions
- Evaluate student papers and/or assignments as they are submitted
- Provide assistance with technological problems that may occur
- Issue the students' final grades

For additional help as you work through this course, please read *Succeeding in Your Online Course*, which is provided at the end of this syllabus.

## Course Contributors

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Guest lecturer: Anna DeHaan White



*Anna DeHaan White, JD*

**Education:**

- Thomas M. Cooley Law School, JD
- Hope College, BA

**Career Highlights:**

- Associate Attorney, Hann Persinger PC – criminal defense, family law, and mediator for both general civil and domestic cases
- Board of Directors, Latin Americans United for Progress, Midtown Counseling Services, Holland Teen Court, and Ridge Point Community Church
- Volunteer Mediator, Mediator Quality Assurance Committee with Mediation Services

## Course Texts

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The following textbooks are **required** for this course:

Covert, Henry G. *Ministry to the Incarcerated*. Ingram, 2014.

Rath, Tom. *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. New York, NY: Gallup Press, 2007. ISBN: 9-781595-620156 (amazon.com) DO NOT BUY A USED COPY.

Zehr, Howard. *The Little Book of Restorative Justice: Revised and Updated*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2015.

Institute for Prison Ministries. *Answering the Call*. (Sent from IPM upon registration)

To order textbook(s), you may use the CUGN online store available on our website at [cugn.org](http://cugn.org) (with the exception of *Ministry to the Incarcerated*, which is not available through our bookstore) or you may order them from Amazon.com or your local bookstore. Shipping is available to international students, but, if international shipping is required, please place your order early enough to allow adequate time for delivery. When available, you may also consider downloading the textbook(s) to an eReader.

**Course Reader (provided in your online course materials)**

*Juvenile Justice System Structure and Process*.

Lynch, Veronica Crawford. “Facilitating Connectedness between Families and Incarcerated Individuals.” (Ch. 10, p.119-128) in *Ministry with Prisoners & Families: The Way Forward* by W. Wilson Goode Sr., Lewis, Jr., Charles E., Trulear, Harold Dean (eds.).

Mulholland, Robert. *Invitation to a Journey*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (p. 15-44).  
*The American Criminal Justice System*.

Travis, J., Solomon, A.L. and Waul, M. *From Prison to Home: The Dimensions and Consequences of Prisoner Reentry*. June 2001.

Cole, David. 2011. *Turning the Corner on Mass Incarceration?*

## Academic Honesty

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At CUGN, we believe all we do is “as unto the Lord” and we thus hold to a high academic standard of honesty; we do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty face consequences ranging from interaction with the Academic Dean to expulsion from CUGN.

**Quizzes and Exams:** Any student found guilty of cheating on a quiz or exam will automatically receive a score of zero for that quiz or exam. A second offense will result in automatic course failure and possible disciplinary action and/or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of cheating.

**Plagiarism:** If a student’s work is found to be plagiarized, consequences will vary depending on the nature of the plagiarism.

If an offense is deemed unintentional, the student will have an opportunity to resubmit the work. A second offense will result in an automatic score of zero for that assignment, which may also result in failure of that course.

More serious plagiarism offenses could result in automatic course failure, disciplinary action, or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of plagiarism. If you have questions about plagiarism, or would like to request resources for learning how to avoid plagiarism, please contact our Registrar’s Office at [registrar@cugn.org](mailto:registrar@cugn.org) or toll free at (888) 487-5376 ext. 3.

## Course Methods

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Throughout this course, a number of methods will be used to engage the students in learning and processing information, interacting with other students, and applying the learning to their lives. These methods include the following:

### Media/Materials

The course will include media presentations of lectures and supplementary materials to be viewed and/or read throughout the lessons of the course.

- **Video-based teaching**

The primary teaching session in each lesson is provided in Flash (FLV) and HTML5 (MP4) format. For international or domestic students who do not have the bandwidth required to view the video (384 Kbps DSL minimum), we provide the option of reading the lesson from a transcript of the teaching video (found in the lesson’s Video Lecture).

- **Multisensory learning**  
Because the primary teaching information is provided in video and PDF text documents, students can choose the medium (or combination of media) that most closely aligns with their individual learning styles.
- **Readings and other media**  
Reading from the required textbook(s) will be assigned to students each week.

### **Interaction**

Whether sitting in a traditional classroom or studying from a distance, students benefit from interaction and collaboration with other students. In order to meet this need in distance theological education, CUGN offers structures and resources to encourage effective community interaction in this course.

### **Discussion Forum**

This forum fosters peer-to-peer interaction in a global, threaded discussion. Students are required to respond to relevant questions posted by the instructors and to read and respond to the posts of fellow students.

### **Reflection**

Through blogging, CUGN provides many opportunities for students to reflect on what they have learned, what they believe, and where they are challenged. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth and transformation.

## **Course Requirements**

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This course consists of a mentor relationship, readings, video lectures, online group discussions, writing projects, quizzes, and blogging. The information regarding these course components and expectations is as follows:

### **Mentor**

This course requires that you seek out a mentor in your community with whom you can communicate by e-mail and/or telephone and with whom you can meet face-to-face at least twice during the course. The purpose of this mentoring relationship is to enable you to assimilate the teaching in this course into your life and ministry. Further definition of the mentor's role in this course can be found in the mentor requirements document available in the Before You Begin section of the course.

### **Reading**

Study assignments covered in this course should be read in the context of the lesson in which they are assigned. In addition to the required textbooks, you may be asked to read supplementary materials.

### **Video Lectures**

Twenty-two of the lessons in this course feature a lecture delivered by Dr. Karen Swanson, one of the Christian church's leading scholars in correctional ministries, and the remaining two lectures are delivered by guest lecturer, Anna DeHaan White. These instructional lectures are required and can be viewed as many times as needed. The written text of the lecture as well as a guided outline to

assist in note taking are made available in PDF format. There are twenty-four lectures in this course; therefore, three lectures will be presented and discussed each week.

### **Discussion Forums**

Discussion questions related to each week's lectures are integrated into the weekly course requirements. The Discussion Forum for each week will begin on Monday at 12:01 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) and end on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST. You must visit the Discussion Forum at least three times during each week of the course and your attendance will be validated by your posts. You are required to post responses to the questions as noted in the lesson requirements and to respond to at least two of the posts presented by other students each week. Your answers to the discussion questions must be posted by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. EST and your required peer response posts must be submitted prior to Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST. Each response should consist of a well-conceived short paragraph or two. In addition, your course professor may comment on your posts, and you should be prepared to respond to those comments as well.

### **Research and Writing**

**There are numerous writing assignments throughout this course including several short (1-2 pages) papers and a longer paper (10-12 pages) explaining your philosophy of correctional ministries and delineating a specific ministry plan. Follow the Philosophy of Christian Correctional Ministry Template.**

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED. Course work is due at the assigned due date unless prior arrangement have been made. LATE PAPERS will be penalized half a letter grade for each day late. Written work is expected to be college-level quality, spell checked, and proof read. Failure to do so will affect the grade on the paper. Use the APA style to cite references. Title pages are not required. Put your name and Assignment # at the top right of the first page. Double space your work, use 12-point type, and 1" margins. (250 words equals one-page of writing). *Contact the professor prior to the deadline if there is a problem.*

### **Quizzes**

You will take a 10-question, multiple choice and/or true/false quiz at the end of each lecture. There is a "remediation" feature built into all quiz questions that allows you to review questions you missed and locate the specific section of the lecture or reading from which the question was drawn. Once you have reviewed the question again, you can attempt to answer a second time. If you are correct, you will receive half of the normal credit for that question. If you do not attempt to answer the second time, you will not receive credit for that question. You will be given only one attempt to take each quiz. All quizzes are timed (20 minutes) and will be graded automatically.

### **Reflection**

You will be required to keep a blog during the 8 weeks of this course, posting *at least once per week*. Blog entries can be viewed only by you and your online professor, unless you wish to make them available to the rest of the class. The purpose of the blog is to help you reflect on what you are learning, what you believe, and where you may be challenged in your thinking and your life by what is studied in this course. The goal of these reflections is personal spiritual growth. See the *Personal Reflection and Evaluation* section near the end of the syllabus for blogging guidelines.

## Due Dates

Each week of the course begins on Monday at 12:01 a.m. EST and ends on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST. Unless noted otherwise, all assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. EST on the Sunday of the week in which the assignment is due. For example, if an assignment is due during Week 2, you must complete and submit it by 11:59 p.m. EST on Sunday, the last day of Week 2. It is at your online professor's discretion to penalize late work.

## Course Grading and Requirements

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All coursework must be completed and turned in to your online professor within five days of the end of Week 8. Please note that it is at your online professor's discretion to penalize late work.

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Online Participation*	30% of Course Grade
Writing Projects	30% of Course Grade
Lesson Quizzes	25% of Course Grade
Reading	10% of Course Grade
Mentor Meetings	5% of Course Grade

\*Note: All students are expected to attend all online sessions.

Grading scale will be as follows:

A	94-100	A-	90-93	B+	87-89
B	84-86	B-	80-83	C+	77-79
C	74-76	C-	70-73	D+	67-69
D	64-66	D-	60-63	F	0-59

## Weekly Topics and Assignments

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Week 1:

- Take the Moodle tutorial for online instruction.
- Post introduction of yourself in the Student Introductions discussion forum.
- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #1: *Biblically-based Correctional Ministries*
  - #2: *Leadership and Spiritual Gifts*
  - #3: *Strengths*
- Read the following:
  - *Ministry with the Incarcerated* Ch. 1, and Ch. 3 *Biblical Foundations for Ministry only*

- Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4 and list the spiritual gifts from these passages.
- *Strengthsfinder 2.0*
- Other assignments:
  - Take the spiritual gifts inventory at <http://www.buildingchurch.net/g2s.htm>
  - Take the *Strengthsfinder* assessment at [strengthsfinder.com](http://strengthsfinder.com) (Your ID code is located at the back of the book and can only be used by one person.)
  - Complete the Spiritual Gifts and Strengthsfinder Activity Sheet.
  - Submit proposed readings (from Readings List)
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 1, 2, and 3.
- Identify and contact your mentor.

### Week 2:

- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #4: *The American Criminal Justice System* (Anna DeHaan White, Guest Lecturer)
  - #5: *Juvenile Justice* (Anna DeHaan White, Guest Lecturer)
  - #6: *Biblical View of Justice*
- Read the following:
  - Selected Readings: *The Juvenile Justice System Structure and Process*
  - *American Criminal Justice System*
  - Legal Terms Glossary: [justice.gov/usao/justice101/glossary.html](http://justice.gov/usao/justice101/glossary.html)
- Write and submit the following:
 

Locate three scriptural passages where words such as “repentance,” “penitent,” and variations of these words appear. Study the passages surrounding the words, noting both the conditions for repentance and the environments in which it takes place. Then present either an attack or defense of the use of incarceration as an aid to repentance, using Scripture to support your position. (1-2 pages)
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 4, 5, and 6.
- Have first meeting with your mentor.

### Week 3:

- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #7: *History of Corrections in America*
  - #8: *Understanding Corrections*
  - #9: *Corrections Sensitive*
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.

- Complete quizzes 7, 8, and 9.

#### Week 4:

- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #10: *Restorative Justice*
  - #11: *The Role of the Church*
  - #12: *Ministry with Children and Families of the Incarcerated*
- Read the following:
  - *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*
  - *Facilitating Connectedness between Families and Incarcerated Individuals*
- Write and submit the following:
 

Restorative Justice Paper: Describe what you believe the role of the Church should be in correctional ministry and what a biblical restorative justice process would look like in your Church. (2 pages)
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 10, 11, and 12.

#### Week 5:

- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #13: *Criminogenic Factors*
  - #14: *Cognitive Behavioral Principles and Trauma-Informed Care*
  - #15: *Evidence-based Practices*
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 13, 14, and 15.

#### Week 6:

- Listen to the following lectures:
  - #16: *Christian Spiritual Formation*
  - #17: *Christian Ministry, Part I*
  - #18: *Christian Ministry, Part II*
- Read the following:
  - *Invitation to a Journey* by Robert Mulholland, p. 15-44.
  - *Ministry to the Incarcerated* Ch. 2 and Ch. 3: Paradigms for Prison Ministry
- Write and submit the following:
 

Complete your spiritual life map and write your one-minute transformation story. (Follow the examples and guidelines provided in *Answering the Call*, pp 24-26).
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.

- Complete quizzes 16, 17, and 18.

#### Week 7:

- Listen to the following lectures:  
*#19: Christian Ministry, Part III*  
*#20: Chaplains and Quality Program*  
*#21: Ministry with Staff and Victims*
- Write and submit the following:  
 Prepare a paper you could distribute to the faith leaders of your church or community in which you outline the ways in which the Church could assist in ministry with victims. (1-2 pages)
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 19, 20, and 21.

#### Week 8:

- Listen to the following lectures:  
*#22: Issues and Barriers to Reentry*  
*#23: Reentry Ministry*  
*#24: Issues and Trends in Corrections*
- Read the following:
  - *From Prison to Home*
  - *Turning the Corner on Mass Incarceration*
- Write and submit the following:  
 Write a Philosophy of Correctional Ministry paper in accordance with guidelines provided in the Research and Writing section of this syllabus.
- Participate in the Discussion Forum.
- Complete quizzes 22, 23, and 24.
- Have final meeting with your mentor.

#### Week 8 Follow-Up:

- Complete and post all reflective blog entries.
- Complete Discussion Participation, Reading Completion, and Mentor Meetings Validations.
- Complete and submit course survey form.

## Personal Reflection and Evaluation

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*The following guidelines may be of help to you as you prepare to make blog entries throughout the course.*

To integrate academic studies with the walk of faith, you are asked to reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what has been learned. These questions may help to guide your reflection process.

### Step 1: Review

Think about the material you have studied in the course. Then ask these questions: What are two things you learned that you did not know before this study? What, if anything, in the course made you look at the church or something in the Bible in a new way?

### Step 2: Assess

Think about your life, both past and present. Given the insights or understanding that you gained in this course, what changes do you need to make in the way you think or behave?

### Step 3: Apply

What specific steps will you take in order to put these positive changes (from Step 2) into practice in your life?

### Step 4: Record

Write your responses to the above reflections in your blog.

## Notes Regarding This Syllabus

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This syllabus is designed to provide learners with an overview of the course. CUGN will provide specific instructions related to assignments for each lesson, specific discussion question postings, and interactive involvement with all students.

## Succeeding in Your Online Course

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1. Remember that this is a full semester's study completed in eight weeks. Therefore, expect that there will be a significant time commitment needed in order to complete all the requirements.
2. If you have any questions about the Moodle program, the course requirements, schedule, or assignments, please contact the online professor who is ready and willing to help you have a successful online learning experience.
3. Technological problems may occur. Be sure to have a back-up plan in case of computer failure or late arrival of textbooks.
4. The satisfaction you get from this course will, in large part, depend on relationships you develop with other participants. So interact honestly, thoughtfully, considerately, and often. Lively discussion challenges the mind and energizes the soul!
5. Before you post a comment or a response to another student's comment, be sure you have read the material and listened to the lectures related to the topic under discussion.
6. Think about how you can promote additional discussion by the comments you post.

7. When you post, respond directly to the question under consideration and express your points clearly and concisely, making only one main point per post.
8. Participate in the threaded discussion at least three different times during each week.
9. Engage fellow students and the professor in dialogue, responding to comments made to your posts.
10. If you find sources related to the topic being discussed, please share them with the class. By the end of the course, we may be able to build a bibliography of books, articles, and Internet sources related to our topic.
11. Practice good “netiquette”: Disagree respectfully, stay on point, and don’t post anything that is derogatory or inflammatory.
12. Enjoy, learn, challenge, and be challenged!