

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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# 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.

### 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.

## 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)

## 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

## Recommended Reading

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Though not required, you may choose to read the textbooks shown below to supplement your learning.

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.

Textbooks can be ordered through your local bookstore, various online bookstores, or through your preferred eReader when available.

## Course Methods

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Throughout this course, a number of methods will be used to engage you in understanding, processing and applying the information learned in this course to your life. These methods include the following:

- **Video-based teaching**  
The primary teaching session in each lesson is provided in video format. If you do not have the bandwidth required to view the video, we provide the option of listening to the lesson or reading the lesson from a transcript.
- **Additional Resources**  
Lessons may be accompanied by additional readings, images, etc. that you can use to supplement your learning.

## Course Requirements

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To earn a Certificate of Completion, you must complete the course requirements. Course requirements include:

1. Viewing the following for each lesson:
  - **Lesson Overview:** A brief outline of what the lecturer will cover in the lesson.
  - **Lesson Objectives:** Objectives describe the learning outcomes you should achieve by the end of the lesson.
  - **Reading:** Suggested readings that will supplement your learning.
  - **Lectures:** 25 minute lessons that can be viewed as many times as needed.
2. Responding to the discussion questions for each lesson.
3. Earning a 70% or higher score on each lesson Quiz and the Midterm and Final Exams. Quizzes and the Exams will cover the material presented in the lectures.