



Center for New Narratives in Philosophy
In partnership with the Center for Science and Society and the Department of Philosophy at Columbia University

Rethinking Justice Internship

Columbia University-Metropolitan Detention Center Education Collaboration

What - Rethinking Justice Internships for Columbia undergraduates. Students will work closely with the director of the program, Professor Christia Mercer (Philosophy), and other professors to help organize and teach 4-week mini-courses in the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC), a maximum security Federal Prison in Brooklyn. Growing out of Columbia's Justice-in-Education Initiative, the new [Rethinking Justice](#) program offers educational opportunities to incarcerated men whose legal status is too unpredictable for them to take a full semester course. Each intern will assist in 6-8 classes a semester (roughly 10:00-5:00 each Friday, which includes 3-hour class and time for travel) and work 2-3 hours a week on organization and planning.

Why - Criminal justice reform is one of the most-urgent political, social, humanitarian, and economic issues of our time. With over 2.3 million people in jail or prison, the U.S. incarcerates more people per capita and in absolute terms than any other country in the world. Arrests and sentences are biased against people of color and other minorities (including gender non-conforming people), and incarceration devastates communities.

The benefits of education in prison are profound. When incarcerated people take courses, their opportunities for reduced sentences, employment, and further education significantly increase. Studies show that prison education develops "social capital" and reduces recidivism. Rethinking Justice Internships offer Columbia students the chance to contribute to the lives of the underserved men of MDC (see an [Op-Ed](#) about a MDC semester-long course) and gain important insight into the criminal justice system.

Who - Internships are available to any Columbia undergraduate (CC, SEAS, Barnard, or GS) who will be 21 years of age or older when they start volunteering (MDC volunteers must be 21, so the age restriction is non-negotiable) and who does not have a criminal record (background checks are mandatory as is fingerprinting). Application is required and we will consider interest, background, and experience with the justice system in our decision-making process.

Where - Lesson planning/administrative work will take place on Morningside campus. Courses will be at MDC, Brooklyn.

How - In order to compensate our Teaching Assistant Interns for their time and work, we are offering a semesterly \$500 stipend and will facilitate independent study credit with the permission of your respective undergraduate college and advisor.

When - Apply now [here](#). Short-listed candidates will be interviewed either over Skype/Facetime or on campus as soon as possible. Interns must attend a morning-long "orientation" at MDC.

If you have any questions, please contact Ghislaine Pagès at gmp2142@columbia.edu or Professor Christia Mercer at cm50@columbia.edu for more information.