

Postsecondary education has been proven to reduce recidivism and promote more successful transitions back into communities for adults returning from incarceration.¹ However, currently incarcerated and reentering adults often face barriers to receiving high-quality postsecondary education. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, with support from Lumina Foundation, conducted an intensive 50-state scan and survey of the statutory, financial, and administrative policies and practices that impact the provision of postsecondary education for this population. This fact sheet outlines the research findings for Ohio.



HOW ARE SERVICES FUNDED?

Correctional Agency Funding

- The Ohio legislature may appropriate state funds for vocational education in state correctional facilities.² Specifically, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) funds credit certification education for Zane State College.³ Postsecondary education is also funded through federal sources, such as the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act⁴ and the Second Chance Pell pilot program.⁵
- Ohio is not using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds for postsecondary education.⁶

State Financial Aid

- The largest Ohio financial aid program has a statutory restriction for individuals who are incarcerated.⁷ Additionally, an individual who is convicted of, pleads guilty to, or is adjudicated a delinquent child for certain crimes is ineligible to receive any student financial assistance supported by state funds at an institution of higher education for two calendar years.⁸ Choose Ohio First scholarships are available to incarcerated students, but they must be pursuing science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine, or dentistry programs.⁹



WHAT IS OFFERED INSIDE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES?

Career and Technical Education and Certifications

- The ODRC provides career and technical education in drafting, electronics, graphic design, HVAC, machine trades, production agriculture, resilient flooring, small equipment repair, and web design; as well as programs leading to an American Welding Society certification, Automotive Service Excellence certification, National Center for Construction Education and Research certification, Occupational Safety and Health Administration certification, Ohio Barber license, Ohio Cosmetology license, ServSafe certification, and Ohio Certified Nursery Technician certification.¹⁰
- Certificates are provided through the federally funded Second Chance Pell Pilot program site at Ashland University, a private institution.¹¹

Associate and Bachelor's Degrees

- ➔ Associate degrees and bachelor's degrees are offered through Marion Technical College, Ohio University, Sinclair College, and Urbana University.¹²
- ➔ Associate degrees and bachelor's degrees are offered through the Second Chance Pell Pilot program site at Ashland University.¹³
- ➔ College courses are offered through the Positive Reentry for Ohio Prisoners Grant at Lorain County Community College, in partnership with ODRC's Lorain Correctional Institution, which is a credit-bearing program that allows currently and formerly incarcerated individuals to take educational courses in coaching and mentoring. Upon release, students may take additional courses at Lorain County Community College.¹⁴

Labor Market, Employer Feedback, and Outcome Data Alignment

- ➔ Ohio has identified local labor market trends as the primary factor that determines the types of postsecondary education and CTE programming that are offered within the correctional facility.¹⁵



WHAT RESTRICTIONS OR BARRIERS ARE IMPOSED ON ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION?

Statutory or Administrative Requirements, Permissions, and Restrictions

- ➔ Participation in postsecondary education programs is based on custody level,¹⁶ behavior during incarceration, and length of sentence.¹⁷ However, work is underway to alter the behavior criteria to impact fewer potential students.¹⁸
- ➔ If withdrawn from an education program for disciplinary reasons, a participant will be eligible to reenroll six months to one year after their withdrawal.¹⁹

Use of Criminal History in State College and University Applications

- ➔ Ohio has 35 state universities, 12 of which used the 2019-2020 Common Application.²⁰ All 12 schools added questions asking applicants to disclose their criminal history: Bowling Green State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University (Kent Campus only), Miami University, Ohio University, The Ohio State University, University of Akron, University of Cincinnati, University of Cincinnati-Blue Ash College, University of Cincinnati-Clermont College, University of Toledo, and Wright State University.
- ➔ Nineteen of the 23 state colleges and universities that do not use the Common Application require students to disclose their criminal history: Central State University, Kent State University regional campuses (Ashtabula, East Liverpool, Geauga, Salem, Stark, Trumbull, and Tuscarawas), Miami University (Hamilton and Middletown campuses), Ohio University regional campuses (Chillicothe, Eastern, Lancaster, Southern, and Zanesville), Shawnee State University, University of Akron-Wayne, Wright State University-Lake Campus, and Youngstown State University. Ohio University also inquires about juvenile offenses: "Have you ever been charged with or indicted for an act you committed as a child that would be a felony if committed by an adult?"



WHAT INCENTIVES AND SUPPORTS EXIST TO ENCOURAGE ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION?

Statutory or Administrative Benefits

- ➔ Individuals can earn “credits” to reduce their sentence by attending postsecondary education programs; eligibility is determined by statute.²¹
- ➔ College and postsecondary career programs are considered jobs in the correctional facilities; therefore, compensation is used to incentivize individuals to participate in the programming.²²

Postsecondary Education as a Factor in Parole Decisions

- ➔ The parole board is required to consider participation in postsecondary education when granting or denying parole.²³

Parole Conditions Related to Postsecondary Education

- ➔ Post-release participation in postsecondary education can meet a parole requirement to seek or obtain employment.²⁴

Support and Services in the Community

- ➔ The parole-granting agency provides information on postsecondary education, but not occupational training, postsecondary education advisors and coordinators, and vocational credential testing.²⁵

Coursework Transfer Policies

- ➔ The Ohio Penal Education Consortium is made up of colleges—Ashland University, Marion Technical College, Ohio University, Sinclair College, and Urbana University²⁶—to ensure synchrony in programming and transferable credits.²⁷ A contract requires these colleges to provide students who are incarcerated with services similar to the ones provided to students on their campuses, such as career services.²⁸

1. Lois M. Davis et al., *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Correctional Education: A Meta-Analysis of Programs That Provide Education to Incarcerated Adults* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2013), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR266.html.
2. Ohio Rev. Code § 5145.06; Joseph Rogers, *Greenbook LSC Analysis of Enacted Budget 2017*, (Ohio: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2017), <https://www.lsc.ohio.gov/documents/budget/132/MainOperating/greenbook/DRC.PDF>; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
3. "Zane State College," Prison Studies Project, accessed March 8, 2019, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/2011/08/zane-state-college/>.
4. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
5. U.S. Department of Education, "12,000 Incarcerated Students to Enroll in Postsecondary Educational and Training Programs through Education Department's New Second Chance Pell Pilot Program," news release, June 24, 2016, <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/12000-incarcerated-students-enroll-postsecondary-educational-and-training-programs-through-education-departments-new-second-chance-pell-pilot-program>.
6. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
7. Ohio Admin. Code 3333-1-09.1(D)(c).
8. Ohio Rev. Code § 3333.38(B). These crimes include aggravated riot, riot, failure to disperse, or misconduct at an emergency.
9. Ohio Rev. Code § 3333.61.
10. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019. Email correspondence between CSG Justice Center and ODRC, December 20, 2019.
11. U.S. Department of Education, "12,000 Incarcerated Students to Enroll in Postsecondary Educational and Training Programs through Education Department's New Second Chance Pell Pilot Program," news release, June 24, 2016, <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/12000-incarcerated-students-enroll-postsecondary-educational-and-training-programs-through-education-departments-new-second-chance-pell-pilot-program>.
12. Incarcerated (CIP)," Prison Studies Project, accessed September 4, 2019, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/2011/08/ohio-university-college-program-for-the-incarcerated-cip/>; "Correctional Education," Ohio University, accessed March 5, 2019, <https://www.ohio.edu/ecampus/print/correctional/>; Email correspondence between CSG Justice Center and ODRC, January 7, 2020.
13. "Correctional Education Program," Prison Studies Project, accessed March 8, 2019, <http://prisonstudiesproject.org/2018/06/correctional-education-program/>.
14. "Lorain Correctional Institution," Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, accessed May 6, 2019, <https://drc.ohio.gov/lorci>.
15. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
16. Ohio Admin. Code 5120-9-45(E)(3).
17. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. The Common Application, an undergraduate college application system, recently removed its required criminal history question, but maintains its questions on disciplinary infractions. However, colleges on the Common Application can add questions regarding criminal conviction or disciplinary information to their individualized applications.
21. Ohio Admin. Code 5120-2-06; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
22. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
23. Ohio Admin. Code 5120:1-1-07(B)(13); Ohio Rev. Code § 2929.20; The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
24. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state parole-granting agencies, July 12, 2019.
25. Ibid.
26. Email correspondence between CSG Justice Center and ODRC, December 20, 2019.
27. The Council of State Governments Justice Center electronic survey of state correctional education directors, July 12, 2019.
28. Ibid.