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| **TEXAS CTE LESSON PLAN**  [www.txcte.org](http://www.txcte.org) | |
| **Lesson Identification and TEKS Addressed** | |
| **Career Cluster** | Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security |
| **Course Name** | Correctional Services |
| **Lesson/Unit Title** | Current and Future Issues of Corrections: Current Issues in Corrections |
| **TEKS Student Expectations** | **130.333.(c) Knowledge and Skills**  (2) The student researches the history of correctional services in the municipal, county, state, or federal setting.  (A) The student is expected to examine the history of corrections such as municipal, county, state, and federal  (7) The student recognizes constitutional laws and laws of correctional systems.  (A) The student is expected to apply constitutional laws, including laws of arrest, to execute official correctional service duties while respecting citizen rights  (B) The student is expected to explore the impact of the U.S. legal system on the correctional system  (C) The student is expected to differentiate between the civil and criminal justice systems and explain how change impacts correctional services  (H) The student is expected to state the conditions under which citizens and non-citizens of the United States may be interrogated in the correctional environment |
| **Basic Direct Teach Lesson**  (Includes Special Education Modifications/Accommodations and  one English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Strategy) | |
| **Instructional Objectives** | The student will be able to:  1. Discuss the causes of increases and decreases in prison and jail populations  2. Explore the role that politics plays in setting correctional policies  3. Identify the impact of budgets on correctional policy  4. Examine the need for staff diversity in the correctional institution  5. Analyze the effectiveness of treatment programs  6. Research the impact of technology on corrections |
| **Rationale** | The field of corrections is constantly changing. To be effective, correctional officers must be aware of the current issues that corrections administrators face daily. |
| **Duration of Lesson** | 2 hours |
| **Word Wall/Key Vocabulary**  *(ELPS c1a,c,f; c2b; c3a,b,d; c4c; c5b) PDAS II(5)* | * Incarceration * Disparity * Rehabilitation * Recidivism * Good Time Credits * Parole * Deterrence * Incapacitation * Staff Alarm and Inmate Tracking System (SAINT) * Global Positioning System (GPS) |
| **Materials/Specialized Equipment Needed** | * Computers with Internet Access * Optional: research materials (textbooks) * Computer-based presentation software for student presentations |
| **Anticipatory Set**  (May include pre-assessment for prior knowledge) | Ask students if they know whether prison and jail incarceration is larger or smaller in the past 5 years. Have them explain their answers by giving examples. |
| **Direct Instruction \*** | I. Current Issues in Corrections  A. Fluctuations in prison and jail populations  1. For years there was a significant increase in the prison and jail populations  2. However, from 2009 to 2010, both jails and prisons had a decline in their populations (Seiter, 2013)  3. From 2000 to 2010 there was an increase in the number of inmates housed in private prisons  4. Reasons for the slowdown in the corrections population:  a) It is natural that after a significant period of growth, with large numbers of incarcerations, that there would be a decrease in admissions and population  b) Political agendas are targeting corrections budgets  (1) Penalties are being lessened because of the need to balance the budget  (2) The effectiveness of tougher penalties has been questioned  c) There was previously an era of lengthening sentences, but now, because of the need to balance budgets, sentences are becoming less stringent  d) “Many states have increased their use of alternatives to incarceration, and these efforts are finally having some impact.”  (Seiter, 2013)  e) The cost to incarcerate individuals continues to rise, and public safety does not seem to be increasing with the larger number  of incarcerations  f) Alternatives to incarcerations, such as probation, have proven to be more cost effective when offenders are properly classified  according to their risk  g) The cost of building and maintaining correctional facilities can be taxing on a government’s budget. Since the economy slowed in 2008, the government’s budget continues to be a  challenge  5. With indeterminate sentencing, offenders went before the parole board when they had served the minimum sentence, and many were released on their first appearance  6. “Between 1990 and 2005, more than 500 prisons were built across the country, increasing the number of facilities nationwide by 42 percent.” (Clear, 2013)  a) Recent research suggests that if you build more prison beds, it causes judges to assess prison time instead of probation  b) William Spelman analyzed prison populations and found that state spending on new prison construction greatly predicted  population increases (Clear, 2013)  7. Minorities are subjected to the criminal justice system at much higher rates than whites (Clear, 2013)  a) Disparity – “the unequal treatment of one group by the criminal justice system, compared with the treatment accorded other groups” (Clear, 2013)  B. Politics and policy  1. Politicians rarely make decisions based on research, cost  analysis, or the weighing of alternatives  a) Most often they make decisions based on the public’s perception of the “right thing to do” (Seiter, 2013) to get themselves (re)elected  2. Changes in sentencing and incarceration policies have more impact on inmate population than anything else  a) Due to changes in policy there was an 88 percent increase in population growth between 1980 and 1996  b) “Only 12 percent of the growth was the result of changes in the crime rate or the makeup of criminal offenders” (Seiter, 2013)  3. Politicians do not want to be known for being soft on crime  a) Ronald Reagan implemented a policy with tougher penalties for federal drug offenders, causing the federal prison population to  increase  b) George Bush successfully used the public’s fear of crime to defeat his opponent in the 1988 presidential campaign  4. When correctional spending increases, budgeting for other services, including the services that reduce crime (i.e. higher education, child care, mental health, and medical services), decreases  5. Sentencing guidelines and set sentencing policies remove the discretion of judges and correctional professionals  a) This “one-size-fits-all” sentencing reduces the chance for successful rehabilitation (Seiter, 2013)  6. Research has shown that the public favors addressing the root cause of crime rather than creating tougher sentences (Seiter, 2013) (i.e. The public wants to see rehabilitation through education and job training)  7. Polls also suggest that the war on drugs has left our prisons full  a) However, most people see drug addiction as a medical problem instead of a criminal problem  b) Most people favor counseling and treatment over incarceration (Seiter, 2013)  C. The impact of budgets on correctional policy  1. Budget shortfalls and the need to reduce spending are forcing policies to focus on cheaper alternatives to incarceration (i.e.  community supervision)  a) “A good example is Texas, which avoided spending an estimated $523 million in more prison beds by expanding drug treatment and diversion beds, many of them in secure facilities”  (Seiter, 2013)  b) “Texas also changed parole practices and expanded drug courts” (Seiter, 2013)  2. Changing how parole and probation violations are processed is also aimed at reducing spending  a) Parole violations account for many incarcerated inmates  b) Some violators are returned to prison for technical violations only  c) Those violations are now being handled by community sanctions such as electronic monitoring, community service, and day reporting centers  3. States are also focusing on releasing and reducing recidivism by offering good-time credit and transitional programs to offenders  4. Prison policy is directed mostly by the budget  a) Earned time credit is being pushed as a reform measure to reduce budget restraints  b) Offenders in 21 states are now being granted time off their sentences if they complete required coursework  c) 18 states are giving credit for work assignments  d) 14 states assign credit for rehabilitation programs  e) 13 states are awarding credit for meritorious services (Clear, 2013)  D. Staff Diversity  1. Staff diversity − “the representation of a wide variety (in gender,  race, and ethnicity) of people working for a correctional agency”  (Seiter, 2013)  2. Staff diversity is important for several reasons:  a) Women bring a calming effect into the men’s prison  environment and double the workforce pool  b) Diversity aids in correctional management because large numbers of the incarcerated population are minorities  c) Corrections personnel learn from each other, which provides better supervision of the inmates  3. There has been a tremendous shift in the cultural representation of the prison population  a) Now there is a disproportionately large Black and Hispanic population  4. Correctional staff must be representative of the inmate population to avoid incidents such as the Attica Prison Riot of 1971  a) The Attica Prison Riot of 1971 occurred when white staff supervised predominately black and Hispanic inmates. This was partly due to cultural and racial differences that led to hostility, mistrust, and a lack of communication that continued  to escalate  E. Effectiveness of treatment programs  1. The public support for treatment programs comes with an expectation that they will reduce recidivism  2. There has been no significant findings that these programs reduce recidivism  a) This led to a move from indeterminate to determinate sentencing with an emphasis on deterrence and incapacitation  (Seiter, 485)  3. Recidivism − “commission of any new crime during the period of community supervision and a return to prison” (Seiter, 2013)  F. Impact of technology on corrections  1. Some institutions are starting to use electronic messaging (email) to reduce the cost of hiring mailroom staff  a) Family members can pay a fee and then send a letter through email to the offender, which is then printed and delivered  b) Software programs automatically search for key words, which improves security and reduces staff time  c) The system pays for itself through the fees charged  d) Inmates can access email through centrally located kiosks that are connected to secure servers and have no access to the Internet  2. Drug detection devices are now used to detect small amounts of drugs that are placed on envelopes  3. Technology is available that detects cell phone signals within prisons to help locate and confiscate the cell phones, but the technology is expensive  4. The use of Global Positioning System (GPS) helps community supervision officers monitor their high-risk offenders  5. Some agencies use advanced body armor to protect their officers  6. The United States Department of Defense has developed the Staff Alarm and Inmate Tracking System (SAINT), which allows officers to activate an alarm that then  a) Pin points an inmate’s location on the system and  b) Activates the cameras in that vicinity |
| **Guided Practice \*** | Correctional Policy Activity. Divide the class into groups. Have them work together to create at least four reform policies to ease the growing prison population in the local area. Give them the following suggestions:  • Analyze the need to: reduce the length of sentences; restrict the use of prison beds for parole violators; and increase the use of community resources for probation violators  • Consider the punishment alternatives for victimless crimes  • Consider reducing probation and parole sentences, parole and probation revocation rates, and utilization of intermediate sanctions  • Research the current policies in your area (if needed) before suggesting reforms When finished have the groups present their proposals to the class. Use the Group Evaluation Rubric, the Peer Evaluation Rubric, the Presentation Rubric, and the Research Rubric for assessment. |
| **Independent Practice/Laboratory Experience/Differentiated Activities \*** |  |
| **Lesson Closure** | Have students create an exit ticket which explains their view on rehabilitating prisoners. This should be anonymous. |
| **Summative/End of Lesson Assessment \*** | * Current Issues in Corrections Quiz and Key * Discussion Rubric * Group Evaluation Rubric * Peer Evaluation Rubric * Presentation Rubric * Research Rubric * Writing Rubric   *Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students must be followed. Examples of accommodations may include, but are not limited to:*  None |
| **References/Resources/**  **Teacher Preparation** | * Seiter, Richard P. *Corrections: An Introduction*. 4th Edition. Boston: Pearson, 2013. * Clear, Todd R., George F. Cole and Michael D. Reisig. *American* *Corrections*. Tenth Edition. United States. Wadsworth, CengageLearning, 2013. * Do an Internet search for the following: the cost of a nation of incarceration |
| **Additional Required Components** | |
| **English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) Strategies** |  |
| **College and Career Readiness Connection[[1]](#footnote-1)** |  |
| **Recommended Strategies** | |
| **Reading Strategies** |  |
| **Quotes** |  |
| **Multimedia/Visual Strategy**  **Presentation Slides + One Additional Technology Connection** |  |
| **Graphic Organizers/Handout** |  |
| **Writing Strategies**  **Journal Entries + 1 Additional Writing Strategy** |  |
| **Communication**  **90 Second Speech Topics** |  |
| **Other Essential Lesson Components** | |
| **Enrichment Activity**  (e.g., homework assignment) |  |
| **Family/Community Connection** |  |
| **CTSO connection(s)** | SkillsUSA |
| **Service Learning Projects** |  |

1. Visit the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/CRS.pdf>, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)