

The Pen Project Internship

ENGLISH 484/584, Fall 2016

Credit hours: 3 Cap: 30

Prerequisite: ENG 102, 105, or 108 with C or better

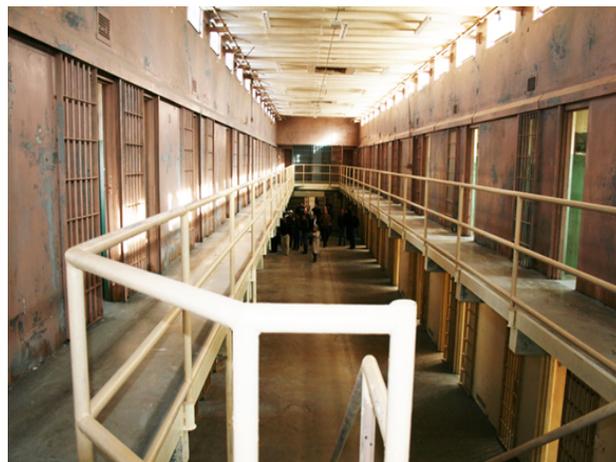
Instructor: Cornelia "Corri" Wells, PhD

NOTE: **Face-to-Face Students** register for **session C**. **Online Students** register for **session B**, but do the work on the **C session schedule**.

The Pen Project is an innovative distance learning program for maximum security and other incarcerated individuals at the New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD) in Santa Fe and the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) in Florence. Interns (typically advanced English majors though others may apply) learn about U.S. prison systems and refine their own creative and critical writing skills by providing written feedback to essays, poems, short stories, and creative nonfiction sent from the penitentiaries. This internship opportunity in prison writing and critical practice debuted in Fall 2010 and serves students who wish to gain pedagogical experience with this unique population with a unique population two thirds of whom did not receive a high school diploma (BJS.gov).

The internship is conducted mainly as an iCourse, with one mandatory in-person orientation the **first Tuesday or Wednesday of the semester (Tues., Aug. 23rd OR Wed., Aug. 24th from 6-9 p.m., Tempe Campus)**. If you are a **Face-to-Face Student** and you cannot attend either orientation in person, please do not apply for the internship for this semester. If you are an **Online Student**, arrangements will be made for you to attend online in real time.

All correspondence with incarcerated writers is moderated through the instructor via ASU/Blackboard. NMCD and ADC staff provide writings gathered from participating prisoners. ASU interns respond with practical commentary and encouragement. Critical readings in writing pedagogy and the prison system itself, along with instructor feedback, inform pedagogical practice and online teaching skills. Regular Blackboard and in-person discussion among intern peers and instructor will also occur throughout the semester. Responses to prisoners' written work are typically organized into 5 or 6 two- to three-week cycles with sufficient flexibility to accommodate interns' personal schedules and prison lockdowns.



Primary Goals:

- at a pragmatic level, to reduce recidivism through education, fostering skills that provide alternatives to crime, the only approach that works, and
- at a more fundamental level, to foster education among a disenfranchised population—as a human right—acknowledging that lifelong learning constitutes an essential facet of human being.

Requirements:

- Critical responses to prisoners' writing
- Regular online discussion of prison literature, prison education, and other prison issues
- Course Portfolio

Security:

All interns **must** adhere to a strict security protocol: *All NMCD and ADC writers and ASU interns **remain anonymous** to each other. Incarcerated writers are identified by first name only and a number while ASU interns use a one-word pseudonym known only to the instructor. Direct contact between incarcerated writers and ASU interns is prohibited. (You will interact with the other ASU interns, however.)*

This 3-credit hour internship involves approximately 150 hours of work over the course of the semester.

If interested, contact Dr. Cornelia "Corri" Wells at Cornelia.Wells@asu.edu for more information and/or to receive the online application. Applications are due no later than **Sun., May 15, 2016**. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis with the earliest received being earliest reviewed and earliest selected.