Careers in Adult Corrections
(Prepared by Dr. Stephen Owen)

Institutional Corrections

✓ Refers to work inside adult correctional institutions (i.e., prisons)
✓ Generally, two types of positions:
  • Correctional counselor (Responsible for inmate case management)
  • Correctional officer (Responsible for institutional security and operations)
✓ Generally, three types of agencies:
  • Federal Bureau of Prisons
  • State correctional systems
  • Sheriff’s offices (But this is often a law enforcement career track)
✓ Read: Ted Conover’s Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing (HV9475.N72 S563 2001)

Community-Based Corrections

✓ Refers to work in probation and/or parole (generally, similar responsibilities)
✓ Positions typically responsible for several tasks:
  • Supervision of clients
  • Preparation of pre-sentence investigation reports
  • “Special” assignments (ISP, Electronic Monitoring, etc.)
✓ Generally, three types of agencies:
  • U.S. Probation Office
  • State probation offices
  • Local probation offices (Community Corrections grants)
✓ Read: Ditton and Ford’s The Reality of Probation (HV9347.A5 D58 1994)
Additional Information

✓ General requirement (except state C.O. positions): College degree
✓ Prestige and qualifications generally higher for federal employment
✓ Pay: Low $30,000 range (except state C.O. positions)
✓ Promotion: Good opportunities if you are motivated and willing to move
✓ Background check: Yes, but sometimes less extensive than policing
✓ Training: Yes, but varies by position type
✓ Firearms training: Yes, but you will not carry them in an institution
✓ Things to consider: Shift work may be required; potential for danger

Selected Websites

✓ For information about employment in criminal justice, generally:
  o http://crju-web.asp.radford.edu/crjuemployment.htm
✓ For information about the Federal Bureau of Prisons:
  o http://www.bop.gov (Select the “Careers” link)
✓ For information about the Virginia Department of Corrections (prisons/probation):
  o http://www.vadoc.state.va.us (Select the “Employment & Training” link)
✓ For information about Federal Probation:
  o http://www.uscourts.gov/fedprob/system/probation.html