

Editor's Welcome

by

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Dear JPER reader:

We are now in our third volume since the inauguration and launching of the journal web site in October, 2014. For the three issues that are out so far, 31 research papers, practitioners' papers, and feature articles have been published. We've seen an even increase in submissions of both research papers and practitioner's papers; Even though submissions usually require revisions before they can be published, mainly the submissions we receive are of good quality, and they cover important issues for education in prisons. And they are well received. On the average, each contribution has been approached nearly 350 times, and has been downloaded as pdf-files approximately 180 times. Whether this is good or bad is hard to know. Approximately 520 people are following the EPEA page on Facebook, and 952 likes on the Correctional Education Association's Facebook page. Should we message these organizations when we publish new material in JPER? Is there anything else we can do to catch the attention of people involved in the education of prisoners? Please share your thoughts with us, either through mail, or preferably on our Facebook page.

We are very satisfied with the access we have to much great artwork created in prisons across the world. These works are inspiring, and remind us of the potential and the creativity we are surrounded by. We treasure the fact that we can use these works on the cover of our journal.

We started the journal with a rolling publishing schedule, as the articles are available on the internet as soon as the contributions are ready through the editorial process. It is our belief that it is important for the researchers, and also for the continuing debate of best practice, that there should be no delay in the publication of new ideas and new research findings. Online publication allows for this, and it is common practice in online publishing. It is also one of the true benefits over the printed journals. More established scholarly journals give access to electronic preprint versions; printing time delays the ongoing discussions, and short turnover is crucial for a research environment. However, will a complete issue published twice a year be more appealing to our readers? Please share your thoughts with us by mail, or even better, use our Facebook page for this.

In the last completed issue (Vol 2, Issue 2) we brought you two research articles and four practitioner's papers. The first research article was authored by [Dorian Brosens and her colleagues](#) in Belgium. They reported from a research project on barriers to participation in vocational training for incarcerated males. They identified among other factors the importance of language barriers and frequency of visitors from the outside for foreign prisoners' participation in vocational education.

The second paper, authored by [Lee A. Underwood and colleagues](#), reported preliminary data from the *Louisiana Sex Offender Treatment Program*. The program includes pedagogical models that should be of general interest for the readers of JPER, in addition to the documentation of more specific psycho-educational effects of the particular program.

Both articles give important contributions to the discussion of best practices in prison education and the reentry process, and will hopefully inspire further challenging discussions on these important matters.

We published three practitioner's papers discussing good practice in prison education. The first paper, by [Catherine Byrne](#) discussed initiatives piloted by maths teachers and school management to increase attendance,



engagement and certification in maths in Irish prisoners. The second paper, authored by [Monika Schumacher](#), showed the perspective of a teacher reflecting on beliefs and assumptions regarding professional issues in the specific learning setting of teaching German as a second language to foreign prisoners. She advocated that teachers believe in incarcerated persons' capability to learn and achieve. This article is our first attempt to also publish material in the author's primary language, so the article is also published in [German](#). If this bilingual practice is a success, we will follow up on this practice. The third paper, authored by [Em Strang](#), discussed a project with long-term prisoners at HMP Dumfries in Scotland. Tutors and students explored the notion and application of 'compassion', focusing in particular on the ways in which understanding compassion enables learning – not just the learning of academic subjects but also of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence. The benefit of teaching compassion was documented through written and verbal student feedback. Three short workshops highlighted the potential in developing and establishing compassion as both subject and practice in prison education.

This concludes Volume 2, issue 2, and you should now be able to download the issue as a full pdf document for your convenience.

The Volume 3 will bring you more new and hopefully inspiring thoughts and ideas for your continuing work in prison education and reentry. We start out by reviewing a book on adult education across European countries authored by Paul Downes. The book is available online, but Paul has also produced a precis of the book for us, covering the information that is most relevant for the work in prison education.

We will continue to bring you the little historical vignettes. So far, we have relied on Thom Ghering at the University of California, San Bernardino to produce these for us. Naturally, his vignettes are mainly covering elements in the history of prison education in the US. I am sure there are historical persons and events also in other part of the world that are worth remembering. Please help us out with anecdotes and historical sketches from *your* country!