

CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION

ASSESSING THE STATUS OF PRISON PROGRAMS AND INFORMATION NEEDS



2004

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Introduction



The most educationally disadvantaged population in the United States resides in our nation's prisons. Incarcerated adults have among the lowest academic skill levels and highest disability and illiteracy rates of any segment of our society—factors that likely contributed to their imprisonment. Upon completing their sentence, most inmates re-enter society no more skilled than when they left. Frustrated by a lack of marketable skills, burdened with a criminal record and released without transitional services or supports, many return to illegal activities. Not surprisingly, statistics show that more than three-quarters of prisoners are recidivists caught in a cycle of catch-and-release.

Correctional education programs are intended to outfit inmates with skills they need to succeed in the workplace. Coursework offerings range from adult basic skills and secondary instruction that enable high school dropouts to gain academic proficiency and earn GED certification, to vocational training to equip inmates with the skills needed to find and hold employment. Special instruction for inmates with disabilities and limited English proficiency is also available.

Premised on the belief that rehabilitation is more effective than the threat of further punishment, correctional education programs have been credited with reducing recidivism among program participants and reducing disciplinary infractions among incarcerated populations. While there is compelling evidence supporting the need for instruction, federal and state investments in correctional programs have fallen over the past decade even as jail and prison populations have continued to rise.

One reason for this decline is that legislators and the public are frequently unaware of the potential savings, in terms of fiscal resources and public safety, which correctional education can confer. Although nearly all federal, state and private prisons offer educational coursework, relatively little is known about the status of these programs nationwide. Much of what we know comes from two national surveys administered by the U.S. Department of Justice on a roughly five-year cycle. They are the

- *Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities.* Given to administrators in every prison in the United States, this survey collects aggregate institutional data, including information on facility size, staff and prisoner characteristics, safety and instructional programs.

- *Survey of Inmates of State and Federal Correctional Facilities*. Given to a representative sample of prison inmates, this survey collects data on prisoner offense and sentence, criminal history, family and personal characteristics and participation in prison activities, programs and services.

Although these surveys provide comparable data on a variety of prison factors, they allot little space to correctional education programs. As a consequence, basic questions about program operations and outcomes remain unanswered, making it impossible to compare the efficiency of correctional education with other federal and state adult job training services.

Drawing on existing federal data sources, this report presents indicators on the scale and effectiveness of correctional education programs offered in federal and state prisons. Documenting trends in inmate access to instructional programs, the characteristics of participants and the outcomes of program participants, each indicator is intended to provide readers with an understanding of the status of correctional education programs today and the context in which they are evolving.

As will become evident, detailed data on program performance are often missing. Moreover, due to the timing of federal survey efforts, indicators contained in this report—which are based on the most current data available—describe conditions that were in some cases last evaluated in 1997. As a consequence, little is known about how recent economic conditions, which have caused many states to cut back services, have affected the availability of correctional education programs.

The answer to obtaining more meaningful data involves reconsidering the substance and organization of federal data collections, as well as identifying alternative sources of program data. Accordingly, each indicator closes with a summary of the type of information that is needed to assess the operation of correctional education programs.

The report concludes with recommendations for improving the overall scope and reliability of correctional education program data. In particular, it calls for harnessing state-level correctional data, typically collected on an annual basis for administrative purposes, to provide a level of richness and description of program-specific characteristics that are beyond what is feasible using national survey approaches.

Indicators

Growth in Prison Populations

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of adults incarcerated in federal, state or privately operated prisons nearly doubled, in part due to changes in federal and state sentencing guidelines.

As of June 30, 2000, over 1.3 million individuals were in the custody of a federal, state or privately operated prison. Unlike jails, which hold offenders with sentences of less than a year or who are awaiting trial, prisons are reserved for adults who have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to one or more years of confinement.

Adult incarceration rates skyrocketed between 1990 and 2000: Prison populations increased by 82 percent, climbing from nearly 716,000 to 1.3 million individuals (Table 1.1). In comparison, the resident population of the United States increased by just 13 percent over the same period, meaning that the number of inmates in federal and state prisons increased in both absolute and relative terms. Indeed, the number of adult inmates for every 100,000 Americans climbed by three-fifths between 1990 and 2000, rising from 288 inmates to 464 inmates per 100,000 Americans (Figure 1).

While all types of prison facilities registered substantial population increases, growth rates slowed in the latter half of the decade in federal and state prisons. Rapid expansion continued, however, in the private sector, where the number of inmates grew by over 450 percent since 1995, rising from 17,000 prisoners in 1995 to 93,000 in 2000 (Table 1.1).

While existing institutions have absorbed some of this growth, correctional administrators have been forced to expand capacity to meet demand. Between 1995 and 2000 the number of federal prisons increased by 9 percent and state prisons by 3 percent, as additional prisons were brought onboard (Table 1.2). The number of private facilities more than doubled over the same period, climbing from 110 in 1995 to 264 in 2000, indicating that government agencies are increasingly turning to the private market to address space demands.

Why Have Prison Populations Grown?

The unprecedented growth in prison populations can be traced, in part, to new federal and state sentencing guidelines that have imposed mandatory prison terms and lengthened minimum sentences for repeat offenders. In particular, the introduction of “Three Strikes” legislation—enacted federally in 1994 and implemented by several states during the decade—has increased the time inmates remain incarcerated. While the specifics vary across states, individuals committing a second or third offense may face double or triple the prison sentence they would otherwise have received.

Truth-in-sentencing laws have also prolonged the amount of time inmates remain incarcerated by requiring that prisoners

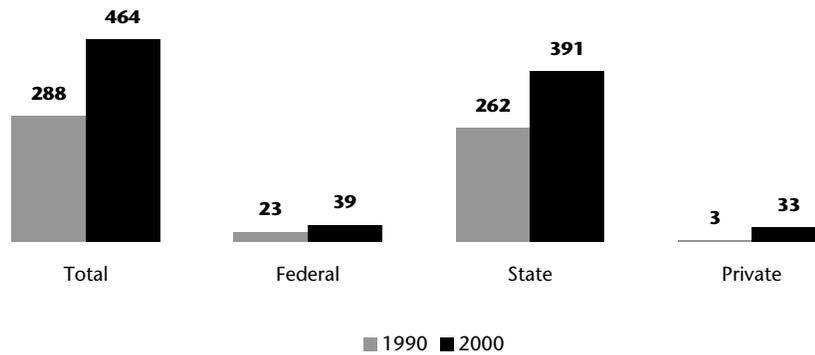
Table 1.1 **Number of inmates in correctional facilities and percentage change over time: 1990, 1995 and 2000**

	Number of inmates			Percent change		
	1990	1995	2000	1990–2000	1990–1995	1995–2000
Total	715,649*	1,023,572	1,305,253	82.4*	43.0*	27.5
Federal	56,821*	80,960	110,974	95.3*	42.5*	37.1
State	651,108	925,949	1,101,202	69.1	42.2	18.9
Private	7,720	16,663	93,077	1,105.7	115.8	458.6

*The definition of a federal facility narrowed in 1995; as a result, data for 1990 overstate the number of inmates, meaning that differences between 1990 and other years are less than those depicted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities, 1990, 1995 and 2000.

Figure 1 **Number of inmates in correctional facilities per 100,000 U.S. residents: 1990 and 2000**



NOTE: The definition of a federal facility narrowed in 1995; as a result, data for 1990 overstate the number of inmates, meaning that differences between 1990 and 2000 are less than those depicted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities, 1990 and 2000.

serve a substantial portion of their sentences. These laws—intended to reduce or eliminate early release for good behavior or due to prison overcrowding—have dramatically increased the time inmates must serve. Other factors, including increasing numbers of parolees returned to prison for technical violations and the difficult economic conditions in the early 1990s, may also have contributed to rising incarceration rates.

What Is Missing?

Existing federal data collections are sufficient to track changes in the scale of the prison enterprise, although the sampling timeline and methodology employed within surveys do not always align with other correctional education

collection efforts. To unify reporting, state policymakers may wish to

- *Standardize criminal justice definitions.* State agencies often use differing terminology to label prison populations and programs. Standardizing definitions can improve consistency across state systems, supporting the use of state data to track prison trends.
- *Align reporting procedures.* Standardizing annual collection procedures and timelines across states can enable policymakers to compare prison populations at similar points in time and allows for more accurate assessments of inmate participation in correctional education relative to the overall population of inmates.

Table 1.2 **Number of correctional facilities and percentage change over time: 1995 and 2000**

	Number of facilities		Percent change
	1995	2000	1995–2000
Total	1,464	1,668	13.9
Federal	77	84	9.1
State	1,277	1,320	3.4
Private	110	264	140.0

NOTE: Data in this table are based on revised data supplied by the Bureau of Justice Statistics for this analysis. Consequently, totals may differ slightly from those published elsewhere.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003.

Educational Attainment of Prison Populations

Incarcerated adults have among the lowest academic attainment and highest illiteracy and disability rates of virtually any segment of society.

Inmates confined in federal and state prisons are significantly less educated than adults in the general population. On average, nearly 27 percent of federal and 40 percent of state prison inmates were high school dropouts in 1997, compared to about 18 percent of adults in the general population (Table 2.1).

Inmates are more likely to possess an alternative certificate, such as the General Education Development (GED) credential than those in the general population. Just over one-fifth (23 percent) of federal and one-quarter (29 percent) of state inmates held a GED credential in 1997 compared with an estimated 4 percent of the general population.¹ Inmates were also less likely to obtain a regular high school diploma than noninstitutionalized adults. Given evidence that individuals with a GED credential do not realize the same economic benefits as those with a regular high school diploma, large numbers of inmates with a GED credential may give cause for concern.²

Not surprisingly, prisoners were substantially less likely to have participated in college-level coursework or to complete a

college degree. Only 8 percent of federal and 2 percent of state prison inmates held a college or advanced degree in 1997 compared to 24 percent of the general population.

Findings from the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), last conducted in 1992, suggest that inmates are disproportionately more likely to have linguistic difficulties. Survey results indicate that roughly 70 percent of federal and state inmates scored at the lowest two levels of literacy measured in the survey, compared to 48 percent of adults in the general population. Additionally, 11 percent of inmates reported that they had some form of learning disability compared to only 3 percent in the general population.³

Attainment by Sex and Race

Generally, women in state prisons were more likely than men to have earned a high school diploma: In 1997, just over 30 percent had completed high school compared to 25 percent of men. In contrast, males were more likely to hold a GED credential (Table 2.2).

Table 2.1 Educational attainment of federal and state prison inmates in 1991 and 1997 and of the general population in 1997: Estimated percentages of different levels

Educational attainment	Federal prisons		State prisons		General population
	1991	1997	1991	1997	1997*
High school dropout	23.3	26.5	41.2	39.7	17.9
GED	22.6	22.7	24.6	28.5	...
High school diploma	25.9	27.0	21.8	20.5	33.8
Postsecondary/some college	18.8	15.8	10.1	9.0	24.4
College graduate or more	9.3	8.1	2.3	2.4	23.8

*General population includes individuals 25 years or older.

... Data on GED credentials were not available; consequently, the estimate of dropouts in the general population includes individuals with a GED. The estimate of 4 percent GED holders in the text is obtained from the National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992.

NOTE: Detail may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1991 and 1997. Data for educational attainment of the general population come from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, March Supplement, 1997.

Table 2.2 **Percentage of state prison inmates who held a regular high school diploma, GED or neither, by sex: 1997**

	High school diploma	GED	Neither
Total	25.5	34.8	39.7
Sex			
Males	25.2	35.2	39.6
Females	30.3	27.9	41.8

NOTE: Due to differences in question construction, percentages for high school diploma and GED presented in this table differ from those in Table 2.1, which represent educational attainment. Educational attainment is defined as the last year of completed schooling; in contrast, data presented in this table are based on survey responses of inmates who were directly asked whether they had a high school diploma or GED.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Minority state inmates were generally less educated than their white peers. In 1997, less than 30 percent of white inmates in state prisons had not completed high school with a regular high school diploma or GED credential, compared to 44 percent of blacks and 53 percent of Hispanic inmates (Figure 2).

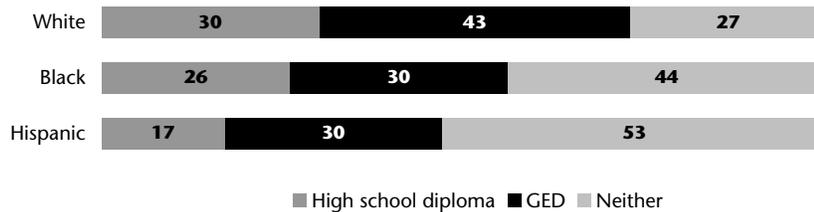
What Is Missing?

Existing federal data can be used to sketch a reasonably complete picture of overall educational attainment among federal and state inmates. However, small sample sizes undercut more detailed statistical analyses, meaning it is nearly impossible to observe statistical significance when making comparisons among subpopulations of inmates.

Given the prohibitively high cost of expanding federal prison data collections, state policymakers may wish to

- *Standardize state definitions of educational attainment.* Many state correctional agencies routinely collect baseline educational data on prisoners entering the criminal justice system, and nearly all collect data on inmates participating in correctional education programs. State surveys using standardized definitions could provide a more robust, timely picture of educational attainment among inmate populations than periodic, federal sample surveys currently provide.

Figure 2 **Percentage of state prison inmates earning a regular high school diploma, GED or neither, by race-ethnicity: 1997**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Correctional Education Program Offerings

Over the past decade, correctional education program offerings have increased in all prison facilities and in nearly every program area, reflecting the belief that all inmates should have access to instructional services.

To provide inmates with marketable skills that can ease their transition back into society, nearly all federal, state and private prisons provide prisoners with education services. Program offerings may include some or all of

- *Adult Basic Education (ABE)*. Basic skills instruction in mathematics, reading, writing and speaking English.
- *Adult Secondary Education (ASE)*. Preparation for the General Education Development (GED) test or alternative certificate of high school completion.
- *Vocational Education*. Training to outfit individuals with the generic employability and specific job skills needed to find and hold gainful employment.
- *College Coursework*. Advanced instruction that enables inmates to earn college credit that may be applied toward a two-year or four-year postsecondary degree.
- *Special Education*. Coursework structured for inmates with learning disabilities.
- *Study Release*. Release of inmates to attend coursework offered in community schools.

Many correctional facilities also offer a variety of non-academic programs, including substance abuse counseling and life skills training, designed to help inmates reintegrate into society.

Correctional Education Program Offerings

Prison educational services have increased over time across facilities and among program offerings. Between 1995 and 2000, adult basic education, adult secondary education and vocational training instructional services increased in most facilities, with state and private prisons registering the greatest gains.

As of June 2000, all federal and roughly 90 percent of state and private prisons reported providing inmates with access to educational services (Table 3.1). In general, federally operated prisons offered inmates a greater selection of instructional services than state or private prisons, with nearly all federal facilities providing adult basic education or secondary educa-

Table 3.1 **Correctional education programs offered in federal, state and private prisons: 1995 and 2000**

	Federal prisons		State prisons		Private prisons	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
Percentage with any						
educational program	100.0	100.0	88.0	91.2	71.8	87.6
Adult basic education	92.0	97.4	76.0	80.4	40.0	61.6
Adult secondary education	100.0	98.7	80.3	83.6	51.8	70.7
Vocational training	73.2	93.5	54.5	55.7	25.5	44.2
College coursework	68.8	80.5	31.4	26.7	18.2	27.3
Special education	34.8	59.7	33.4	39.6	27.3	21.9
Study release	5.4	6.5	9.3	7.7	32.7	28.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities, 1995 and 2000.

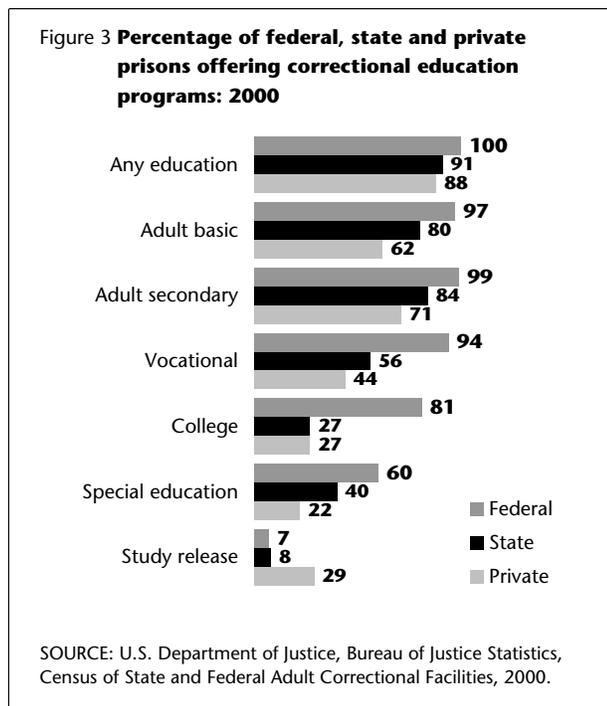
tion services. It is likely that prisoner access to adult secondary coursework in state and private prisons will continue to improve if states follow the federal Bureau of Prisons' lead in requiring inmates without a high school diploma or GED credential to enroll in secondary instruction.

Recognizing the need to outfit inmates with marketable skills, correctional agencies increased vocational training opportunities between 1995 and 2000, with the greatest advances registering in federal and private prisons. Conversely, the percentage of state prisons offering college coursework and study release programs fell over the period.

Care must be taken when interpreting these findings, however, because in the absence of consistent program definitions, institutional staff may use different criteria to classify coursework. In some institutions, prison administrators may classify prison industry programs that are only production-oriented as "vocational training," and in other circumstances, classify advanced vocational training as college coursework, if related instruction is offered at the postsecondary level. As such, esti-

mates of college coursework may overstate the actual provision of advanced instruction.

Although all types of institutions provide inmates with access to education services, privately administered prisons were least likely to offer educational services. For example, only 62 percent of private prisons offered adult basic education services in 2000, compared to 80 percent of state-operated prisons (Figure 3). While proponents of privatization suggest that privately operated prisons can generate substantial savings to taxpayers, further research is needed to assess whether these savings, to the extent they exist, come at the expense of educational programs.



While prisons throughout the country offered prisoners access to adult basic and GED preparatory programs, prisons located in the northeastern United States were somewhat more likely to offer access to vocational training and special education services in 2000 than in any other part of the country (Table 3.2). In contrast, inmates in southern states had the most limited access to instructional services, including vocational training, college coursework, special education and study release programs.

Table 3.2 Correctional education programs offered in state prisons, by region: 2000

	Total	North-	Mid-	South	West
		east	west		
Number of facilities	1,320	205	291	632	192
Percentage with any					
educational program	90.3	88.8	89.0	90.2	94.3
Adult basic education	79.6	80.5	79.7	78.5	82.3
Adult secondary education	82.8	85.4	82.1	82.4	82.3
Vocational training	55.2	67.8	52.6	50.0	62.5
College coursework	26.4	26.8	34.0	20.7	33.3
Special education	39.2	51.7	43.3	32.4	42.2
Study release	7.6	6.3	11.7	3.5	16.1

NOTE: Regional data for 2000 differ from that reported elsewhere in this report due to changes in federal definitions; this table reflects revised data supplied by the Bureau of Justice Statistics for this analysis. Consequently, totals may differ slightly from those published elsewhere.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2003.

What Is Missing?

While it appears that a large and growing number of federal, state and private prisons are offering inmates access to correctional education programs, the data leave a number of questions unanswered. To improve reporting, prison administrators will need to supply more detailed data on the

- *Scope of prison offerings.* Information on the number of sections of a course that is offered within a prison and the number of different courses that are offered within a specific content area (e.g., carpentry, metalworking, printing).
- *Size of course enrollments.* Data on the number of inmates participating in a given class.
- *Intensity of educational coursework.* Statistics on how often particular courses are offered (e.g., year-round, quarterly) and the length of instructional time provided to inmates on a daily basis.
- *Course curriculum.* Descriptions of the materials that are used to structure coursework.
- *Standards and assessment.* Information on how instruction is organized and students assessed for skill mastery. States may also seek to align prison reporting with standards identified in the National Reporting System for Adult Education, an outcome-based reporting system for state-administered, federally funded adult education programs, developed with the support of the U.S. Department of Education.

Inmate Participation in Correctional Education

Just over half of all eligible inmates participate in correctional education programs. Those who participate are more likely to enroll in high school or GED preparatory coursework and vocational training than in other program offerings.

Although all federal and most state and private prisons offer some form of educational instruction, only about half of inmates participate in institutional programs. Given the low levels of educational attainment among correctional populations and the potential benefit that a GED credential or vocational certificate can confer, why aren't more inmates served?

To begin, not all prisoners are eligible to participate. Prisoners with disciplinary problems or who have certain types of sentences may be restricted from enrolling. Priority may also be given to prisoners with upcoming release dates or those with relatively greater educational need. Finally, the availability of offerings within prisons is seldom sufficient to meet inmate demand, meaning that individuals are often wait-listed until a course opening occurs.

Among those who do participate, most enroll in vocational training or GED preparatory coursework: Of the roughly 52

percent of state inmates participating in education coursework in 1997, approximately 32 percent were enrolled in a vocational training program and just under a quarter in high school or GED preparatory coursework (Table 4.1).⁴

The popularity of GED coursework may be explained, in part, by correctional policies in some states that require prisoners without a high school education to participate in correctional education. Federal mandates, such as those contained in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, may also require service delivery to inmates with certain education needs.

A relatively large, albeit declining, proportion of federal and state prisoners also participated in college-level coursework; Declines may be due, in part, to federal legislation adopted in 1994 that made inmates ineligible for Pell grants, which paid the tuition for college courses taken while incarcerated, as well as backlash at the state level over the use of state funding to provide postsecondary training to inmates.

Table 4.1 Percentage of federal and state inmates participating in correctional education programs since most recent incarceration: 1991 and 1997

	Federal prisons		State prisons	
	1991	1997	1991	1997
Total	67.0	56.4	56.6	51.9
Educational program				
Adult basic education	10.4	1.9	5.3	3.1
GED/High school	27.3	23.0	27.3	23.4
Vocational training	29.4	31.0	31.2	32.2
College coursework	18.9	12.9	13.9	9.9
English as a second language	...	5.7	...	1.2
Other	8.4	5.6	2.6	2.6
Number of prison inmates	53,753	87,624	709,042	1,046,136

... Data not available.

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1991 and 1997.

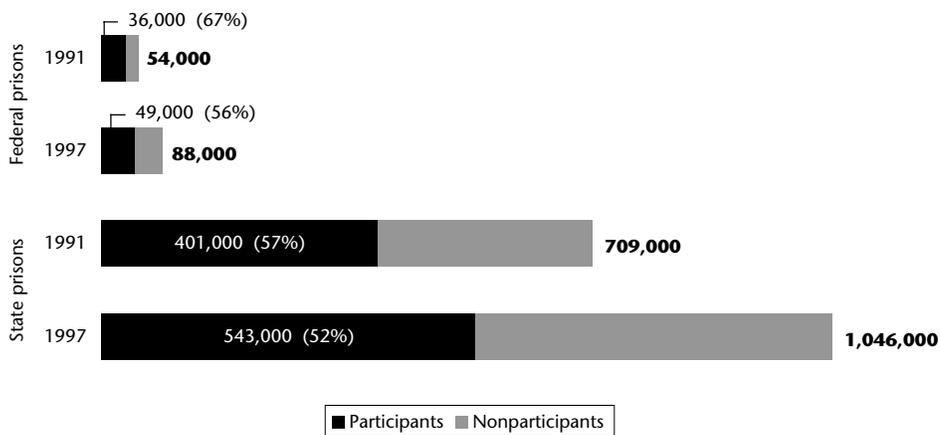
Generally, the percentage of federal and state inmates participating in correctional education declined between 1991 and 1997, even as the number of program participants increased (Figure 4). This may be because inmate demand for educational services dropped over time or, more likely, because the availability of instructional services was not sufficient to meet inmate needs.

What Is Missing?

Understanding declines in prisoner participation in correctional education will require more detailed data on institutional services, including

- *Inmate demand for educational services.* Data on the number of inmates eligible to participate in correctional instruction and the number who are wait-listed for lack of space
- *Intensity of participation.* Information on the length of time inmates participate in programs. Ideally, this information would be in sufficient detail to enable policymakers to quantify participation along a number of dimensions, ranging from average daily attendance (ADA) to multi-year data spanning the time inmates actively participate in coursework.
- *Program retention.* Information on the number of inmates who complete their coursework following registration and the reasons why program dropouts choose to leave programs.

Figure 4 **Total number of federal and state inmates and number and percentage of inmates participating in correctional education programs since most recent incarceration: 1991 and 1997**



NOTE: Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Characteristics of Correctional Education Participants

Inmates without a regular high school diploma were somewhat more likely to participate in correctional education programs than those with more advanced skill holdings.

Once incarcerated, just over half of all inmates take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Participation rates vary by inmate characteristics, however, in part due to factors that are outside of prisoner control. Generally, inmates with the greatest educational need have the highest participation rates, with women, minorities and younger prisoners most likely to receive services.

Participation by Educational Attainment

Individuals lacking a regular high school diploma were more likely to participate in educational programs than their more educated peers, suggesting that educational resources are focused on inmates with the greatest instructional needs. Interestingly, a relatively large proportion of these individuals were enrolled in adult basic education and English as a Second Lan-

Table 5.1 **Participation in correctional education programs since most recent incarceration, by educational attainment: 1997**

	Federal prison inmates with:					
	8th grade or less	Some high school	GED	High school diploma	Some college	College graduate
Percentage in any						
educational program	56.1	66.7	61.9	51.3	53.4	45.5
Adult basic education	7.9	2.0	1.5	0.6	0.9	0.0
GED/High school	37.3	54.8	31.1	8.4	5.5	5.3
Vocational training	16.3	22.0	31.9	33.0	33.5	23.2
College coursework	0.2	1.9	17.0	14.9	22.7	12.7
Limited English proficient	11.5	3.6	4.1	5.8	3.6	8.1
	State prison inmates with:					
	8th grade or less	Some high school	GED	High school diploma	Some college	College graduate
Percentage in any						
educational program	52.7	54.0	60.4	42.0	43.5	40.0
Adult basic education	10.1	4.3	1.4	0.8	0.5	0.0
GED/High school	31.4	38.5	27.9	4.4	2.1	1.7
Vocational training	21.9	24.7	42.5	30.5	31.2	25.3
College coursework	0.3	0.8	16.5	13.5	19.3	16.4
Limited English proficient	4.2	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.4	1.6

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to inmates' participation in more than one educational program. Table based on individuals with reported educational attainment, which may differ from results published elsewhere due to how inmates with missing data were coded.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

guage programs (Table 5.1). This might be expected if a sizeable number of these individuals were learning disabled or immigrants who came to the United States lacking the linguistic ability to succeed in the workforce.

Federal and state inmates who had completed less than a regular high school diploma were most likely to have participated in some form of GED preparatory coursework or vocational training since their most recent incarceration. Relatively high rates of participation among those with a GED likely reflect coursework taken by inmates who earned their GED since their admission, as well as those seeking additional training to brush up their academic skills.

Although overall participation rates were somewhat lower for inmates possessing a regular high school diploma or other advanced training, a relatively large proportion of these individuals were enrolled in vocational training or college coursework to advance their existing skill holdings.

Participation by Gender

Women incarcerated in federal prisons were slightly more likely to participate in educational programs than men: In

1997, approximately 61 percent of women enrolled in educational coursework compared with 56 percent of men (Table 5.2). Although relatively equal proportions of men and women participated in education instruction within state prisons, men were slightly more likely to enroll in vocational or GED preparatory coursework than women.

Irrespective of prison type, both males and females were most likely to participate in vocational training or GED preparatory coursework.

Participation by Race-Ethnicity

Blacks and Hispanics were more likely than whites to participate in correctional education courses offered in state prisons in 1997 (Table 5.3). In particular, a higher proportion of blacks and Hispanics enrolled in GED/high school preparatory coursework than whites, although whites were somewhat more likely to enroll in college coursework than either of these groups.

Participation by Age

In both federal and state prisons, younger inmates—those age 24 or younger—are somewhat more likely to participate in

Table 5.2 **Percentage participation in correctional education programs since most recent incarceration, by gender: 1997**

	Federal prisons		State prisons	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Any educational program	56.0	61.1	52.0	50.1
Adult basic education	1.8	2.1	3.1	3.3
GED/High school	22.9	24.4	23.6	21.3
Vocational training	28.1	31.8	32.4	29.5
College coursework	12.8	14.1	10.0	9.1
Limited English proficient	5.6	6.0	1.2	0.5

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one educational program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Table 5.3 **Percentage participation in correctional education programs by state prison inmates' most recent incarceration, by race-ethnicity: 1997**

	White	Black	Hispanic
Any educational program	48.8	53.8	52.6
Adult basic education	2.1	3.3	4.8
GED/High school	18.7	26.1	25.4
Vocational training	32.0	33.7	29.1
College coursework	12.4	9.0	7.1
Limited English proficient	0.1	0.1	6.4

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one educational program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

educational programs than their older peers (Figure 5). Within federal prisons, almost two-thirds of the youngest group of inmates—those aged 24 or younger—had participated in some type of educational program in 1997, compared to about half of those 45 or older. A similar pattern emerged at the state level, with the likelihood of correctional education enrollment decreasing with age.

Differences in participation rates may be due to a number of factors, including federal and state policies that place priority on educating young adults who lack a high school education, higher educational attainment rates among older inmates and individual decisions on the part of inmates themselves.

Participation by Offense

State prison inmates incarcerated for violent offenses are more likely than those convicted of drug or other offenses (such as property crimes) to have participated in correctional education. In 1997, nearly two-thirds of state inmates incarcerated for violent offenses participated in a correctional education program, compared to half of those with drug offenses and less than half of those with other convictions (Table 5.4). A substantial portion of violent offenders participated in vocational training.

One reason that participation rates may be greater for violent offenders is that they may be more likely to draw longer prison sentences and thus have greater opportunity to participate in education programs. In general, inmates serving sentences of six or more years are more likely to have participated in correctional education than those with lesser sentences.

This may be because these individuals have been incarcerated for a longer period of time, enabling them to move off waiting lists to take advantage of program openings.

What Is Missing?

The limited number of questions relating to correctional education and the small sample sizes of inmates in federal surveys make it difficult to assess the characteristics of those participating in correctional education programs. Improving the quality of reporting will entail collecting data that includes

- *Representative data on federal and state participants.* Short of increasing the size of federal samples, it may be possible to increase the accuracy of reporting by using state prison administrative record data to track inmate participation in education programs.
- *Demographic characteristics of inmates.* Baseline data on program characteristics are necessary to enable policymakers to control for inmate characteristics and to develop quasi-experimental research designs to assess program outcomes. Background information could include

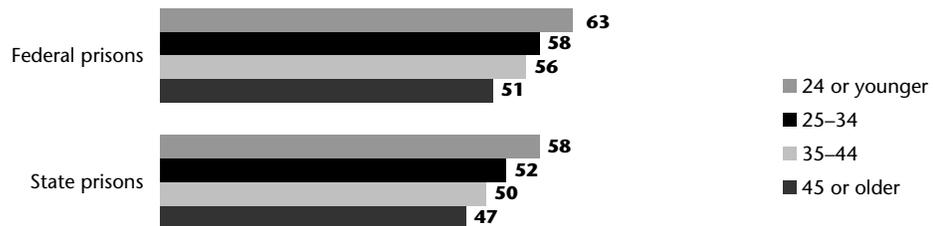
Personal characteristics, including inmate’s age, sex, race, marital status and any health or substance abuse problems.

Criminal history, including current and prior arrests and convictions, type of offense, length of current sentence and time served.

Educational background, including highest level of education attained, learning disabilities and placement test scores.

Program participation, including types of services inmates received prior to intake or during incarceration.

Figure 5 **Percentage participation in correctional education programs since most recent incarceration, by age: 1997**



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Table 5.4 **Percentage participation in correctional education programs by state prison inmates since most recent incarceration, by offense and length of sentence: 1997**

	Offense category			Prison sentence in years				
	Violence	Drug	Other	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 99	Life
Any educational program	62.9	50.2	44.9	37.4	53.3	61.6	63.2	64.8
Adult basic education	4.1	3.8	3.0	1.7	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.6
GED/High school	27.9	22.4	19.1	18.2	23.4	29.8	26.7	25.9
Vocational training	39.8	24.5	24.3	19.9	32.4	38.3	41.6	40.9
College coursework	14.8	5.9	6.9	3.1	9.2	11.5	19.2	22.9
Limited English proficient	1.2	3.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.7

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one educational program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Outcomes of Correctional Education Participants

Nearly three-quarters of all federal and state inmates who possessed a GED credential earned it while incarcerated.

One of the primary purposes of correctional education programs is to equip inmates with the academic knowledge, technical skills and credentials needed for workplace success. Assessing programmatic outcomes requires collecting detailed information on inmate participation in instructional programs, including the type and intensity of program involvement, changes in skill holdings and award of program credentials.

Unfortunately, current federal data collection instruments are not designed to isolate the effects of correctional education on program participants. Questions on correctional education programs are typically embedded within larger, wider-ranging surveys intended to document the overall operation of the criminal justice system. As a consequence, available data often lack detail and are limited to counts of prisoners participating in programs, the number and type of programs offered across the state and (in rare cases) the number and type of credentials awarded to prisoners. Changes in question formats across years have also reduced the capacity to assess trends in prisoner outcomes over time.

Federal inmates are generally better educated than those in state prisons: In 1997, 41 percent of federal prisoners had completed high school, compared to just 26 percent of state inmates (Table 6.1). However, relatively similar percentages of both federal and state inmates earned a GED.

A relatively large proportion of federal and state inmates completed their GED credential while incarcerated. Nearly three-quarters of federal and state prison inmates who held a GED earned the credential while in prison, either during their most recent admission or during a prior incarceration (Figure 6). The remainder of inmates obtained a certificate outside a penitentiary, either prior to or subsequent to their initial incarceration.

Interestingly, roughly half of the inmates who held a GED credential earned it during a prior incarceration. This may indicate that a GED credential, in and of itself, does not confer substantial labor market advantages to GED holders and that other factors also mediate the post-release success of prison parolees.

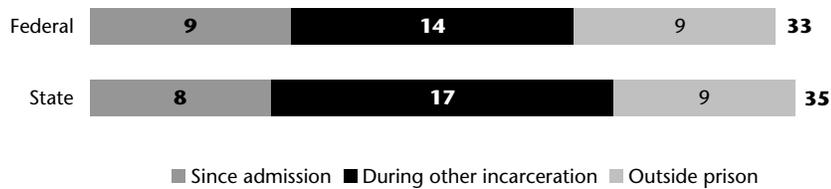
Table 6.1 **Percentage of federal and state inmates earning a GED credential: 1997**

	Federal prisons	State prisons
Completed high school	40.6	25.5
Earned GED	32.8	34.8
Since admission	9.4	8.3
During other incarceration	14.0	17.4
Outside prison	9.4	9.1

NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one educational program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Figure 6 **Percentage of federal and state inmates earning a GED credential, by when credential earned: 1997**



NOTE: Detail may not add to total due to rounding or inmates' participation in more than one educational program.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1997.

Tracking prisoner educational outcomes is complicated by a limited set of credentialing options in many vocational and special education fields. Few educational programs terminate with a recognized skill award such as the GED credential, making it difficult to conclusively document successful inmate outcomes. While this problem is not unique to correctional education programs, failure to find alternative measures of program completion will continue to undermine reporting of instructional success.

What Is Missing?

With the exception of data on prisoner completion of GED programs, there are currently no reliable indicators on the attainment or completion of educational programs by federal and state prisoners. Improving the quality of correctional education reporting will entail collecting data that includes

- *Standardized definitions of program completion.* An absence of recognized credentials in some areas complicates measurement. Where state or private industry credentials are not available, prison administrators may wish to develop common metrics for skill attainment or adopt measures used in other federal job-training programs to evaluate program outcomes.
- *Attainment of program goals.* Data documenting inmate completion of educational coursework, including any credentials, certificates, diplomas or degrees conferred.
- *Changes in skill attainment.* Tracking changes in educational skills, using pre- and post-tests of course knowledge or standardized test scores, can validate educational outcomes for prisoners participating in programs where no recognized certification exists.

Recidivism

Inmates who participate in correctional education programs and who are equipped with the skills to succeed in society are less likely to be reincarcerated following their release.

In 2000, roughly 1.3 million adults were confined in federal and state prisons. Of these, roughly 7 percent were serving death or life sentences, meaning that 93 percent of all prison inmates are eventually released.⁵ Often dropped back into society without transitional services, lacking the educational or social skills to support themselves and possessing the stigma of a prison record, it should come as no surprise that many of these individuals eventually return to prison.

According to statistics from a U.S. Department of Justice Study,⁶ which tracked the outcomes of 272,111 inmates released from state prison in 1994, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of prisoners were rearrested for a new offense within three years following their release and more than one-half (52 percent) were reincarcerated for a new offense or parole violation (Table 7.1).

Most recently, the Three State Recidivism Study commissioned by the Office of Correctional Education, U.S. Department of

Education, employed a rigorous, quasi-experimental research design to track the outcomes of 3,200 inmates released from prisons in Maryland, Minnesota and Ohio in late 1997 and early 1998.⁷ The study found that inmates who participated in correctional education programs exhibited lower recidivism rates at the end of the three-year study period and were one-third as likely to be reincarcerated as non-participants (Figure 7). Participants also earned higher wages than non-participants for each of the three years they were followed.

While the study documented lower recidivism rates for correctional education participants in the three participating states, findings cannot be generalized nationally because characteristics of correctional education programs—including statutory definitions of crime, sentencing guidelines and employment data—vary from state to state. Researchers also noted considerable variation across the three participating states, and among facilities within states, in how data were collected and maintained.

Table 7.1 **Recidivism rates of prisoners released in 1994 from prisons in 15 states, by time after release**

Time after release	Cumulative percentage of released prisoners who were:			
	Rearrested	Reconvicted ¹	Returned to prison with a new sentence ²	Returned to prison with or without new sentence ³
6 months	29.9	10.6	5.0	...
1 year	44.1	21.5	10.4	...
2 years	59.2	36.4	18.8	...
3 years	67.5	46.9	25.4	51.8

... Data not available.

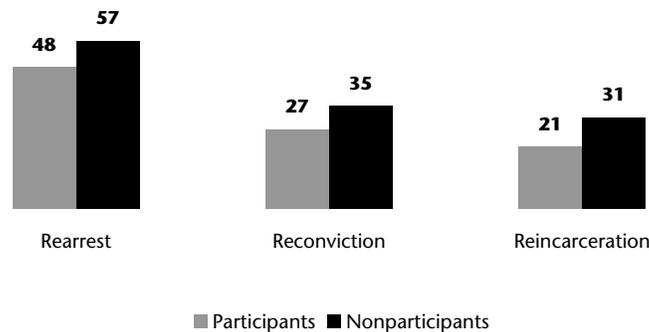
¹Because of missing data, prisoners in one state were excluded from the calculation.

²"New sentence" includes new sentences to federal or state prisons but not to local jails. Because of missing data, prisoners in two states were excluded from this calculation.

³Includes both prisoners with new sentences plus those returned for technical violations on old sentences. Data available for 3 years only.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994*, June 2002, NCJ 193427.

Figure 7 **Recidivism rates of correctional education participants and nonparticipants in three-state recidivism study group: 1997–98**



SOURCE: Correctional Education Association, *Three State Recidivism Study*, 2001.

While correctional education programs are widely championed as tools for reducing recidivism rates, state support for instruction has failed to keep pace with increasing populations. This may be because policy-relevant data are unavailable or are considered unreliable on methodological grounds. Indeed, many state-funded recidivism studies have been criticized for selection bias, for their failure to control for the benefits of other services, such as anger management or drug treatment and for the short timelines in which post-incarceration outcomes are measured.

What Is Missing?

State prison administrators can make a substantial contribution in assessing the association between correctional education and recidivism. Doing so will require standardizing reporting and incorporating post-release data elements into current state information systems. Building capacity will entail

- *Establishing a common definition of recidivism.* There is currently no agreed-upon national definition of recidivism, meaning that states are using different procedures for determining recidivism rates.
- *Linking prison administrative records within and across state agencies.* Unique prison identifiers do not always travel with inmates following release, meaning that recidivists may be assigned new identifiers each time they are imprisoned.

- *Structuring institutional data to support research studies.* To isolate the effects of correctional education, institutional databases must be organized at the individual record level, meaning that data on inmate characteristics, criminal history and institutional experiences are accessible. Inmate records should also contain detailed information on how inmates are assigned to program services and their participation in other programs (e.g., prison drug treatment, post-release services).
- *Tracking inmate participation in the labor market.* Efforts to track inmates' post-release outcomes in the labor force—for example, by collecting Unemployment Wage Record data—can help quantify inmates' success in finding and keeping work, and remuneration for employment. Other potential sources of data include military and postal records systems.
- *Assessing inmate participation in advanced education.* Parolees pursuing postsecondary education can be tracked either by linking with state postsecondary agencies or using statewide data systems, such as the National Student Clearinghouse.
- *Assessing other post-release outcomes.* Using a unique identifier such as the Social Security number, it may be possible to conduct administrative record matches with other private, state or federal agencies to assess inmates' receipt of public assistance benefits, such as food stamps, welfare, Aid for Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), Medicaid or public housing.

Staffing Correctional Education Programs

The number of correctional education staff employed in educational programs has failed to keep pace with increases in prison populations over the past decade.

Federal and state penitentiaries have added staff as inmate populations have grown. Between 1990 and 2000, the total number of staff in federal and state prisons climbed by 63 percent, increasing from 264,000 to 430,000 full-time or part-time employees (Table 8.1). These individuals performed a variety of functions, ranging from administering facilities and supervising inmates to providing specialized services, including health care, maintenance, food service and educational instruction.

A relatively small number of federal and state prison staff are engaged in providing educational services, such as academic or vocational instruction. Between 1990 and 2000, the total number of educational staff increased by nearly 26 percent, rising from 11,000 to 14,000 individuals (Figure 8). In spite of this, the proportion of staff engaged in providing correctional education services declined over the period, falling from 4.1 to 3.2 percent of total institutional staff (Table 8.1).

The combination of increasing inmate populations and relatively small growth in educational staff has meant that the ratio of inmates to instructors has substantially increased. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of inmates per instructor climbed from 65.6 to 95.4 inmates, although there is some evidence that rates have stabilized since 1995. Unfortunately, due to survey construction, it is not possible to differentiate between part-time and full-time employees in these estimates. As such, these findings may underestimate the actual inmate to education staff ratio if states rely on part-time instructors to provide instructional services.

In the absence of comprehensive data on prison services, it is difficult to determine how relative reductions in education staffing have affected the quality of correctional education services. If inmate demand for services has remained unchanged, then it is likely that increasing numbers of inmates are being wait-listed for services, particularly if safety concerns

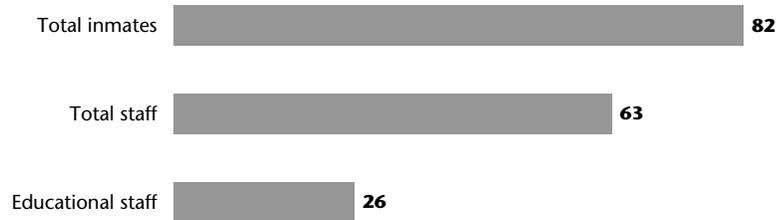
Table 8.1 **Correctional staff employed in federal and state prisons: 1990, 1995 and 2000**

	1990	1995	2000
Total inmates	715,649	1,023,572	1,305,203
Total staff	264,201	347,320	430,033
Educational staff	10,903	11,020	13,688
Percent educational	4.1	3.2	3.2
Inmates per education staff	65.6	92.9	95.4

NOTE: Staff includes part-time and full-time employees.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1990, 1995 and 2000.

Figure 8 **Percentage increase in federal and state inmate populations, total prison staff and educational staff: 1990 to 2000**



NOTE: Staff includes part-time and full-time employees.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Census of State and Federal Correctional Facilities, 1990 and 2000.

or physical plant limitations prevent prison administrators from increasing class sizes.

What Is Missing?

To provide a better understanding of state staffing of correctional education programs, federal and state administrators will need to collect detailed data that include

- *Program assignments of educational instructors.* In the absence of standardized terminology, prison administrators may classify staff as educational even if they do not provide formal instruction. For example, in some states prison staff supervising prison industries may be classified as instructional even if they do not provide formal training.
- *Number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) instructors.* Prison administrators use both full-time and part-time staff to provide educational instruction. Current federal data collection does not permit calculation of FTE instructors within or across states.

- *Time spent providing classroom instruction.* For a variety of reasons, correctional education staff may spend a substantial amount of time fulfilling non-instructional duties. Data on the actual time spent providing classroom instruction can help ensure more accurate assessments of the outcomes of inmate participation.
- *Donation of instructional services.* Community volunteers often provide instructional services to prison inmates. Data on the hours of service provided by these instructors can provide a better understanding of statewide investment in instructional programs.
- *Credentials of paid and unpaid instructors.* The quality of instruction can be a function of the skill holdings and experience of classroom teachers. Information on the credentials and experience of prison instructors can be used to assess whether instructional outcomes are affected by instructor characteristics.

State Expenditures for Correctional Education

State expenditures for correctional education programs are nearly impossible to quantify due to differences in state accounting procedures and the different channels used to fund instructional programs.

Governmental expenditures for correctional facilities have skyrocketed over the last decade. Since 1982, combined federal, state and local government expenditures for corrections activities have nearly doubled, climbing from \$27.7 billion in 1990 to \$53.9 billion in 1999 (Figure 9).⁸

The most recent data on state investment in inmate programs comes from a U.S. Department of Justice study⁹ of state prison expenditures, which found that national spending for inmate programs amounted to \$1.2 billion in 1996. This sum, which includes spending for educational and non-educational programs, amounted to roughly 6 percent of total annual state-wide operating expenditures (Table 9.1).

Reporting of state expenditures for correctional education was greatest in states located in the northeastern and western United States, locations which tend to offer relatively greater inmate access to correctional education programs. In particular, annual spending per inmate in states situated in the northeast was more than three times greater than that of states located in southern states (\$1,943 vs. \$634).

Lack of state correctional education expenditure data can be traced to a number of drawbacks in state data, including difficulty in separating inmate program spending from general operating costs and the inability to account for outlays made by other state agencies. For example, state departments of

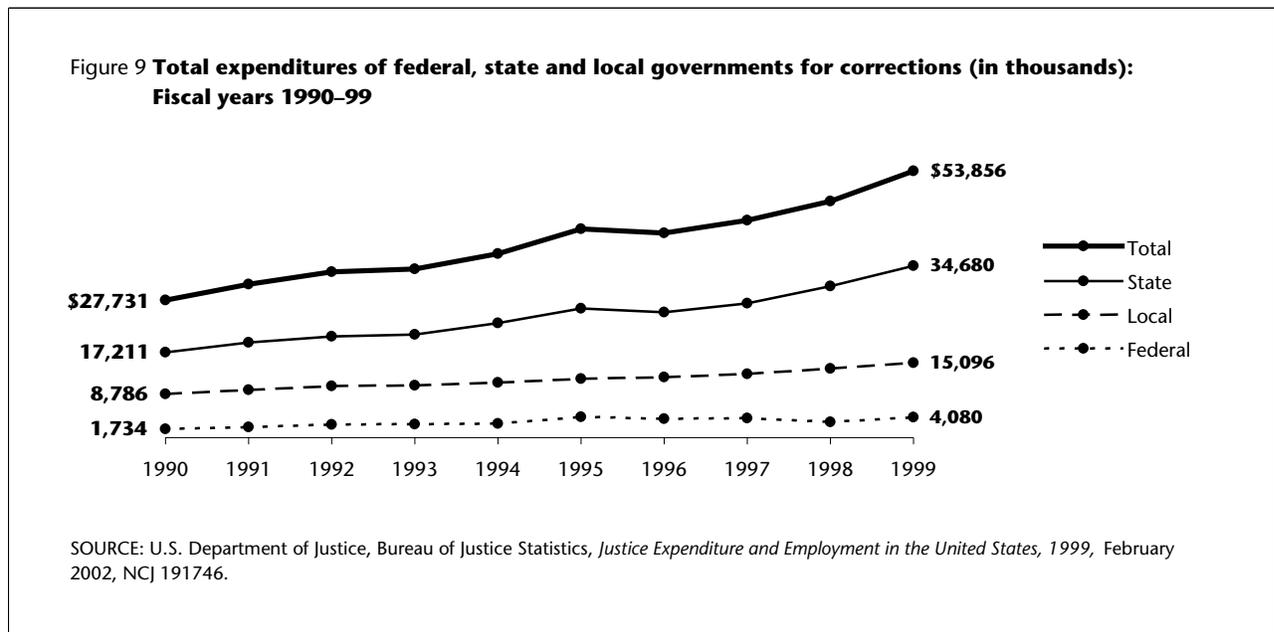


Table 9.1 **State prison expenditures for inmate programs: Fiscal year 1996**

Region and jurisdiction	Inmate program expenditures*			
	Total	Percent of annual operating expenditure	Per inmate	
			Per year	Per day
National estimate	\$1,231,100,000	5.9	\$1,196	\$3.28
Total reporting states	1,040,806,002
Northeast	311,519,992	6.7	1,943	5.32
Midwest	156,765,236	4.3	989	2.71
South	218,523,400	4.1	634	1.74
West	353,997,374	7.7	1,712	4.69

... Data not available.

*Some states reported expenditures for selected programs only or were unable to separate program expenditures from general operating costs. The national estimate is adjusted for nonreporting.

NOTE: Programs include educational and noneducational instruction and counseling programs, and work and recreational activities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *State Prison Expenditures, 1996*, August 1999, NCJ 172211.

education (or other public or private agencies) may have helped defray the costs of providing teachers for GED classes or other academic or vocational training courses.

What Is Missing?

There are currently no accurate statistics for federal or state expenditures for correctional education programs. Developing statewide estimates will entail

- *Developing a consistent definition of correctional education coursework.* State agencies may use different criteria to classify correctional education coursework. Quantifying statewide expenditures will require establishing a consistent definition of coursework that qualifies as educational in nature, as well as comparable definitions of the components—capital and labor—that are used to provide program services.
- *Identifying educational funding streams across state agencies.* State expenditures for correctional education programs may flow from various federal and state agencies, not all of which are housed within the state department of corrections. States will need to differentiate state resources earmarked for correctional education programs from those used for other purposes, and to the extent possible, quantify resources flowing from other federal and state agencies.
- *Tracking how funds are expended.* States have considerable discretion in how they allocate resources across correctional education programs. Institutional databases should quantify the relative expenditure of federal and state resources by function and object code within correctional programs.

Summary

Federal and state prison populations have nearly doubled over the past decade, fueled in part by new sentencing requirements that imposed mandatory minimum sentences on repeat offenders. While there is some evidence that annual growth rates have slowed since the mid-1990s, the total number of inmates incarcerated in our nation's prisons continues to rise in absolute terms.

Although overall educational attainment rates of inmates have remained relatively stable over time, correctional populations continue to have among the lowest educational attainment rates and highest levels of illiteracy and disability of any segment of society. Lacking the skills to function in the marketplace or community, a substantial portion of inmates are recidivists, caught in a cycle of incarceration and release.

State investments in correctional education programs have not kept pace with the growth in prison populations. Although reliable data on state program expenditures are not available, the proportion of prisoners participating in correctional programs declined between 1991 and 1997. According to the most recent statistics available, only about half of all federal and state inmates participate in correctional education programs. Prison staffing for correctional education programs has also fallen in relative terms, with the ratio of inmates to education staff increasing by nearly 50 percent between 1990 and 2000.

Increasing inmate access to correctional education programs will require providing state policymakers and the general public with a better understanding of the scope and effectiveness of correctional education programs and training efforts. Unfortunately, data collected at the federal level often lack the detail needed to inform policy formulation. While state-level data offers some promise of supplementing this information, lack of comparable collection strategies across state systems and reliability within, compromises the value of this data. As such, though federal and state data can provide a good deal of information about the outcomes of correctional education—and a great deal about program offerings in particular states—there are still fairly large gaps in our understanding of how state correctional education programs operate nationwide and the characteristics of inmate participation within facilities.

The answer to obtaining more meaningful data for policy purposes will likely involve simplifying and aligning current federal and state data collection efforts. At the federal level, these changes could entail consolidating ongoing survey efforts into a single national collection instrument administered to a representative sample of prisons.

States routinely collect annual statistics on the status of correctional education programs offered within prisons (and local jails). Because they are tailored to address state conditions, these data often contain a level of richness that are beyond what is possible using a national survey approach. And because they are collected on an annual basis, these data can also provide more timely information on changes in program operations, help to establish a clearer link between correctional education and recidivism and inform the allocation of federal and state resources across adult education programs.

State data collection procedures typically vary along a number of dimensions, including the timing of collection, coverage of population, quality and procedures used to classify, collect and report prisoner involvement. Due to this variability, it is nearly impossible to aggregate existing data across states to produce credible national estimates of correctional education practices and outcomes. Moreover, in the absence of rigorous state-defined data collection guidelines, the reliability of locally reported data may vary across correctional facilities within a state.

To improve the utility of state data, existing data collection efforts could be reorganized around a core set of elements, identified and agreed upon by the field, which could be used to assess the scope and usefulness of correctional education programs. At a minimum, these elements could include data on program inputs, practices and outcomes, as well as background information on program participants, that would enable state policymakers and researchers to better understand the costs and benefits associated with correctional instruction.

To assess the potential for using state data to obtain more detailed, timely data on correctional education, the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, U.S. Department of Education, is currently collaborating with state correctional education administrators in seven states—Arizona, Florida, Maryland, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon and Texas. Building off the indicators contained in this report, project members are working to identify a common core of data that can be aggregated across states to track the status of correctional education programs on an annual basis.

As a culminating activity, state participants were asked to analyze their data to assess the feasibility of proposed data elements and report their experience at a working group meeting sponsored by the Department in the late fall of 2003.

For more information on this project, contact:

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Notes

¹Estimates for GED completion rates in the general population are drawn from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992. Estimates for the general population included in Table 2.1 do not include data on GED credentials as a separate category. Consequently, estimates of GED credential holders in the general population are included in the high school dropout category.

²For an analysis of the economic returns of a GED, see Cameron, S., and Heckman, J. 1993. The Nonequivalence of High School Equivalents. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 11:1; or Boesel, D., Alsalam, N., and Smith, T.M. 1998. *Educational and Labor Market Performance of GED Recipients*. Research Synthesis. (ERIC ED 416 383). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

³U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992, cited in Barton, P., and Coley, R. 1996. *Captive Students: Education and Training in America's Prisons*. Princeton, New Jersey: Educational Testing Service.

⁴The Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities was not administered to inmates incarcerated in private institutions.

⁵Petersilia, J. 2003. *When Prisoners Come Home*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press.

⁶Langan, P., and Levin, D. 2002. *Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 193427.

⁷Steurer, S., Smith, L., and Tracy, A. 2001. *Three State Recidivism Study*. Lanham, Maryland: Correctional Education Association.

⁸Gifford, S. 2002. *Justice Expenditure and Employment in the United States, 1999*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 191746.

⁹Stephan, J.J. 1999. *State Prison Expenditures, 1996*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 172211.