

Two years ago, Hope College and Western Theological Seminary (WTS) began a pilot program to offer a Christian liberal arts education to long-term incarcerated men at Muskegon Correctional Facility in Muskegon, MI. We are pleased to announce that the initial success of The Hope-Western Prison Education Program (HWPEP) has led the college to pursue taking steps to accreditation. Essentially, the prison will become an extension campus of the college, and men housed there will be able to earn a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Faith, Leadership, and Service with standards as rigorous as those expected of Holland-based Hope College students.

Following the model established by the pilot program, the classes will be taught by professors from Hope College and Western Theological Seminary, and Hope and Western students will have the opportunity to be teaching assistants. Since its start in 2019, seven professors from Hope and Western have taught a total of six classes to 20 incarcerated students who have enrolled in the program. Ten seminary and college students have served as assistants.

A cohort of 20 students will be added each year until the program is fully operational at four cohorts (80 students). The students will be recruited from among the 31,000 male prisoners in the 26-prison system operated by the

Michigan Department of Corrections. Prospective students will need letters of recommendation from their warden, chaplain, or prison school principal. They will apply to the college, write an essay, and possibly be interviewed by video. If accepted, they will be moved to the

