Mission Statement

Cornell Prison Education Project

Draft of June 2, 2013

OUR VISION:

***The Cornell Prison Education Program embodies Ezra Cornell’s commitment to founding a university where “any person can find instruction in any study” by offering university-level educational opportunities to incarcerated persons.***

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Cornell Prison Education Program is to provide courses leading to college degrees for people incarcerated in upstate NYS prisons; to help CPEP students build meaningful lives inside prison as well as prepare for successful re-entry into civic life; and to inform thought and action on social justice issues among past and present CPEP students, volunteers, and the wider public.

**I. CPEP is dedicated to creating and maintaining an atmosphere in which incarcerated individuals can experience the transformative power of education by**

\*offering classes that (a) mirror the academic standards of other courses taught by Cornell University and lead to a college degree and (b) serve the specific needs of a prison student body by promoting personal growth and satisfaction, intellectual perspectives that help to foster a more positive immediate environment, and knowledge that leads to better family relationships;

\*offering extra-curricular opportunities that generate an intellectual atmosphere within the prison setting , including guest lectures, study halls, preparatory courses in writing and math, and workshops on study skills, time management and wellness

\*publishing a collaborative journal of writings from both main campus and prison campus students, to be distributed to the campus communities in order to encourage wider support of the program and its goals.

**II. CPEP is committed to offering the Cornell community—graduate students, undergraduates, faculty, and staff-- opportunities to explore social justice issues, the U.S. criminal justice system, the transformative power of education, and the value of teaching and working with the this disenfranchised population.**

**III. CPEP staff and volunteers pledge to recognize the value and dignity of each person, create a classroom atmosphere of mutual respect, expect work from students that is intellectually rigorous, and model academic integrity and open-minded inquiry.**

**IV. To ensure success in promoting these goals and values, CPEP will also:**

\*work closely and sensitively with prison administration to maintain and expand the program, including the implementation of extra-curricular events, efficient course scheduling, appropriate communication between instructors and students, and granting “transfer holds” on full time students so that they can complete their degrees;

\*publicize the successful activities of CPEP to alums, the general public and the University community in order to garner support, financial and other, and set forth a visionary model for prison education for other institutions and individuals to follow;

\*coordinate efforts and share strategies and information with other upstate New York prison education programs for mutual benefit;

\*offer counseling services that will develop skills and knowledge useful for re-entry into civil society.