

**Course Title: Special Populations in Corrections**  
**Credit Hours: 3**

Course Description: This course focuses on unique needs and issues of specialized inmate populations. The class also addresses management strategies and programming necessary to humanely incarcerate these groups and to prepare them for successful reintegration into free society. Focus populations will include the medically and mentally ill, the mentally challenged, women, juveniles convicted as adults, the elderly, high risk inmates, and those with unique or non-mainstream religious needs.

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Recognize the wide variety of situations that identify an offender as being “special” needs
2. Articulate the role of line correctional staff in insuring specialized needs are recognized and met
3. Demonstrate high standards of professionalism
4. Demonstrate awareness of inmate rights and needs
5. Identify mental illnesses within the incarcerated population
6. Recognize the impact major medical illnesses and eldercare have on the incarcerated population and the correctional system
7. Define special needs and issues encountered in dealing with elderly and adolescent populations in the prison environment
8. Recognize the unique issues encountered in the incarceration of the female population
9. Describe the cultural awareness and sensitivity needed to work with diverse religious populations
10. Apply proper offender supervision procedures
11. Utilize basic computer skills to research issues surrounding the incarceration of special populations and to document “what works” strategies and programming

**COURSE COMPETENCIES**

1. Recognize the wide variety of situations that identify an offender as being “special” needs
  - a. Identify and define special populations in corrections
  - b. Define the unique aspects in housing, treating, rehabilitating, and developing release plans for individuals with special needs
  - c. Explore the “what works” research and evaluate strategies utilized to address offenders who are not amenable to interventions
  - d. Identify “best practice” interventions for each of the above noted special populations with a special emphasis on reintegration, and evaluate their effectiveness

2. Articulate the role of line correctional staff in insuring specialized needs are recognized and met
  - a. Recognize that special needs do not excuse negative behavior
  - b. Participate in awareness training to recognize and appropriately respond to needs of these populations
3. Demonstrate high standards of professionalism
  - a. Apply ethical decision making strategies
  - b. Employ acceptable behaviors, performance, and traits for a correctional officer
  - c. Illustrate proper interpersonal relations
    - i. Define the importance of role modeling a primary method of learning and instilling change in offender behavior
    - ii. Determine undue familiarity and/or sexual misconduct
    - iii. Determine boundaries
    - iv. Demonstrate anti-harassment knowledge
4. Demonstrate awareness of inmate rights and needs
  - a. Recognize the importance of dealing with special needs offenders as individuals
  - b. Recognize that consistent treatment does not always mean similar treatment
  - c. Recognize the impact of Constitutional law and court rulings on the incarceration of these populations
5. Identify mental illnesses within the incarcerated population
  - a. State the various diagnoses found within the incarcerated population
  - b. Identify the different impacts these diagnoses can have on inmate adjustment and behavior
6. Recognize the impact major medical illnesses and eldercare have on the incarcerated population and the correctional system
  - a. State the various medical diagnoses commonly found within the incarcerated population
  - b. Identify the different impacts these diagnoses can have on inmate adjustment
7. Define special needs and issues encountered in dealing with elderly and adolescent populations in the prison environment
  - a. Review the impact of age upon adjustment to incarceration
  - b. Indicate the special considerations of incarcerating the very old and the very young
8. Recognize the unique issues encountered in the incarceration of the female population
  - a. Define the unique issues surrounding the incarceration of females
  - b. Identify the issues surrounding dealing with pregnancy and childbirth in the prison setting
9. Describe the cultural awareness and sensitivity needed to work with diverse religious populations
  - a. Review a calendar of world religions to gain insight into the number of potential religious accommodations that face correctional administrators
  - b. Demonstrate knowledge of key religious legislation to learn which accommodations must be made and when a requested accommodation can be refused
10. Apply proper offender supervision procedures
  - a. Examine security and classification levels as they apply to special populations

- b. Analyze the different types of supervision and insure inmates are supervised at only the highest level needed, not grouped based solely upon a special need
  - c. Explain the special supervision and security needs that can arise from Special Needs
  - d. Resolve conflict using the minimum amount of force needed to insure compliance
  - e. Demonstrate “Cognitive Reflective Communications” (CRC) skills
  - f. Demonstrate the ability to adapt these skills and techniques to meet the needs of special population offenders
11. Utilize basic computer skills to research issues surrounding the incarceration of special populations and to document “what works” strategies and programming.
- a. Utilize available forms to complete tasks
  - b. Employ e-mail proficiency
  - c. Employ intranet proficiency

## **COURSE OUTLINE (Suggested)**

### **General Management Issues**

Problem Management and Institutional Perspectives  
 Legal Parameters and Operational Authority  
 Budgetary Constraints  
 Ever-Changing Populations  
 Complex Network of Decision Making  
 Officer’s Role in Management of Special Population Prisoners  
 Purposes of Policies and Procedures  
 Policies and Procedures on Special Management Populations  
 Need for Continued Review of Policies and Training

### **Populations Created as a Result of Illness or Injury**

HIV Infection  
 Hepatitis B  
 Hepatitis C  
 Tuberculosis  
 Hypertension  
 Heart Disease  
 Diabetes  
 Chronic Kidney Disease  
 Cerebrovascular Disease  
 Epilepsy  
 Brain Injury  
 Hemiplegic, paraplegic, and quadriplegic inmates  
 Psychotic Disorders

Depression  
Schizophrenia  
PTSD  
Co morbid Disorders  
Suicide  
Malingering and Manipulation

### **Populations Created by Age or Gender**

Geriatrics  
Demography of Graying Prisoners  
Youthful Offenders—Recognizing and Dealing With the Difference  
From Adult Inmates  
Special Juvenile Programming  
Female Offenders  
Pregnancy in Prison

### **Populations Related to Lifestyle Choices**

Detection of Substance Abuse and Treatment of Withdrawal  
Chemically Dependent Inmates  
Transgender Prisoners

### **Other Special Populations**

Sex Offenders  
Death Row Inmates  
Security Housing Unit Inmates  
Inmates on Hunger Strikes

### **Legal Considerations and Context**

Constitutional Requirements  
Deliberate Indifference  
Serious Medical Needs Requirement  
Responsibilities of Prisoners  
Rights of Special Populations