

Professor takes part in Inside-Out Prison Exchange Training Program

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This summer, Oakland University Criminal Justice professor Amanda Burgess-Proctor took part in an international program that trains university faculty to develop and implement classes that take place inside correctional facilities.

Established in 1997, [the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program](#) brings traditional college students and incarcerated students together for semester-long learning.



University instructors who participated in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Training Program this summer. OU Professor Amanda Burgess-Proctor is pictured in the second row, fourth from left.

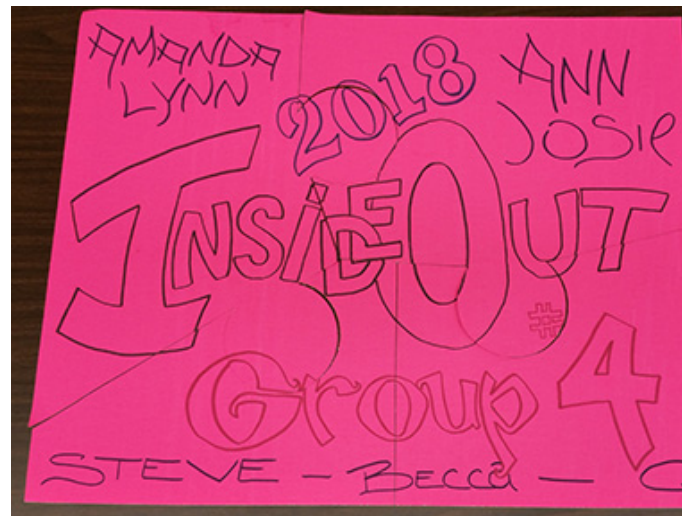
Burgess-Proctor was part of a group of 20 university instructors who spent three days collaborating with and learning from a group of 10 individuals who are incarcerated at the Macomb Correctional Facility in New Haven, Michigan. The training was facilitated by Inside-Out Founder and Executive Director Lori Pompa, a Criminal Justice instructor at

Temple University, along with Jennifer Cobbina, an associate professor of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University.

The “inside” participants are part of the Michigan Theory Group, a collective of Inside-Out alumni who meet regularly at the Macomb Correctional Facility. They provided insight and a perspective to the “outside” instructors about how to facilitate Inside-Out courses at their home universities.

“It’s very intensive training,” Burgess-Proctor explained. “We spent a lot of the time learning how to create conditions that allow for people to talk to each other and engage in creative interactions.”

For part of the training, the instructors were tasked with creating activities that could be incorporated into a potential Inside-Out course. Burgess-Proctor was part of a group that devised an exercise for a potential class about childhood trauma and its impact on the community. She enjoyed collaborating with instructors from a wide range of disciplines, including Criminology, Social Work, Political Science, Philosophy and English.



An "inside" participant created a puzzle as part of a group activity in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Training Program.

“This was an incredible opportunity to bring together ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ people for a one-of-a-kind educational experience,” said Burgess-Proctor. “I was excited to collaborate with people from so many different fields. I met people from all over the U.S., and one faculty member came from a university in the United Kingdom.”

Burgess-Proctor added that she hopes to create an Inside-Out course at Oakland University in the future. She points out that the program is as much about enriching the lives of “outside” students as “inside” students.

“It’s an enormous privilege being able to interact with people from whom we have a great deal to learn,” she said. “I think a lot of people make assumptions about people who are

incarcerated. Inside-Out is such a wonderful opportunity to break down stereotypes and remind us of our shared humanity.”