

1135-A1-2425

Robert Scott* (robscott@cornell.edu), 300 Kennedy Hall, Ithaca, NY 14850. *Teaching Math in Prison: Observations from the Cornell Prison Education Program.*

This paper explores the challenges of teaching college-level mathematics in prison. For this study, the author interviewed several math instructors from a college-in-prison program in upstate New York. It is common for prison educators to hope that education will help incarcerated students think outside of their current circumstances. Instructors interviewed for this study discussed the challenges of using mathematics in prison as a vehicle for empowerment. Several people have observed how prison strictures, the insistence on the abiding of rules, and the drills/repetition experienced in prison recapitulate challenging experiences of math classrooms that the incarcerated students experienced before their incarceration. Still, few of the math instructors interviewed looked outside of the methodology of practice and repetition as a means to success in their math classrooms. In the absence of an extra-mathematical curriculum of social justice, the paper explores the descriptions of successful math students in the prison environment, and considers their prison-specific metrics of success. The author explores what the incarcerated students themselves, and their definitions of success, say about the college campus and its portrait of the successful math student. (Received September 26, 2017)