

Sabbatical Report
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During my DIP, I continued my work bridging the gap between practitioners and academics. As such, I was able to teach two training programs for the National Institute of Corrections, two for the Correctional Management Institute of Texas as well as programs for several corrections and probation departments throughout the country.

Demand for my training program has been steady and I have tried to help criminal justice professionals think better and more critically about the life and death decisions that they have to make every day. As such, I began work on a book is designed to be an accessible text for students and practitioners alike; one that could be used in the classroom, but also in training programs like mine. It will serve to help undergraduate classes in teaching these very important skills to future criminal justice professionals. Over the year, I was able to complete four chapters and lay the groundwork to finish the book. It is due to Lynne Reinner Publishing in August of 2019.

One thing that has become very clear over my over ten years of researching the corrections world is just how much discretion leaders in the criminal justice field have over the life or death decisions they constantly make. Some are obvious – like whether or not an officer should use deadly force. But many are more subtle – like a warden’s decision to ban sugared drinks in his institution.

With the first decision, the effect on human life is self-evident; a civilian will either live or die. But the second would not be to most people, almost none of whom would not realize that the sugar in a soft drink could be used to make prison alcohol, and that alcohol is often the cause of assaults on inmates and staff.

Criminal justice students are going to be asked to make these kinds of decisions someday, while professionals already are making them. My work during the 2017-2018 school year was intended to benefit both groups and I am appreciative that I was given the opportunity to do so.

