Walls to Bridges (W2B) Course

**PHIL 407 / SOCY 407 Philosophical Issues: Restorative Justice**

Fall 2022

Class meets Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30pm

at Collins Bay Minimum Security Institution

Walls to Bridges is an experiential learning course that brings together students from Queen’s University (‘outside students’) with students from Collins Bay Minimum Security Institution (‘inside students’) to learn and share knowledge based on their lived experience and critical analysis of academic scholarship. In this course, students will explore the complexities of criminalization and punishment through reflection, discussion, reading, and activity-based learning. This is a transformational educational experience that draws upon lived experience as a source of philosophical knowledge and challenges the artificial boundaries between people who are experiencing imprisonment and those who are not.

See <http://wallstobridges.ca> for more information about the W2B program.

**Essential information**

* Enrolment is limited to 5 outside Queen’s students
* There is a two-stage application process (written application and zoom interview)
* All students must commit to attend and actively participate in each and every class (Tuesdays, 2:30-5:30pm)
* Outside students must consent to security clearance procedures required by the Correctional Services of Canada (including fingerprinting)
* Outside students must provide their own transportation to Collins Bay Minimum (1455 Bath Road, Kingston; the 701 express bus stops nearby, and carpooling may be arranged)

Please see the [Philosophy](https://www.queensu.ca/philosophy/) and [Sociology](https://www.queensu.ca/sociology/) websites for the course application. Applications must be received by Dr. Lisa Guenther at [lisa.guenther@queensu.ca](mailto:lisa.guenther@queensu.ca) no later than **5pm on 20 May 2022**. Zoom interviews will be scheduled for late May.

**Course Description**

Restorative justice is a practice of responding to harm or wrong-doing by seeking healing and reconciliation rather than punishment and exclusion. In this course, we will study philosophical theories of restorative justice as well as common restorative practices, such as healing circles and truth and reconciliation commissions. We will learn about the Indigenous roots of restorative justice, including the Haudenosaunee conciliation ceremony and the African concept of Ubuntu (which means, “We are all related,” or “I am because you are”). And we will also engage with the perspectives of Indigenous, Black, and feminist critics of restorative justice who argue for the importance of righteous indignation in seeking justice and question the power dynamics of forgiveness in situations of oppression.

The course uses a learning circle format. An agenda will be prepared to guide the class discussion; however, the class is expected to lead the discussion, reflecting upon course readings and connecting the content of these readings to lived experiences. Group work, active participation and open listening are essential components of the course.

**W2B Application**

Name: Date of birth:

Major: GPA:

Email: Phone number:

1. What interests you about this specific course? What do you think this unique course will offer you?
2. What can you bring to the class? For example, special knowledge or experiences.
3. Have you taken any courses in philosophy, criminology, law, social justice, or other relevant courses?
4. How do you imagine the similarities and differences between the learning needs, goals, and challenges of inside and outside students?
5. What do you think will be the most challenging issue for you in this class? Do you have any apprehensions or concerns?