

## Utah Prison Education Project NEW VOLUNTEER FAQ

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with UPEP. Here you will find a brief description of our project as well as answers to frequently asked questions.

### **Q: What is UPEP?**

**A: UPEP is an on-site higher education program that advances educational equity, empirical research, and advocacy. Through a commitment to social transformation, UPEP offers postsecondary coursework to approximately eighty students across five facilities of the Utah State Correctional Facility. We currently offer both for-credit and noncredit coursework.**

### **Q: What is your curriculum? What course should I teach?**

**A: UPEP offers a flexible curricular approach which allows for a diversity of interdisciplinary courses. We've found that the courses that work best in the prison are the courses that professors are most passionate about teaching. All disciplines and fields are welcomed and encouraged to apply.**

### **Q: What course level should I teach?**

**A: We welcome both lower-division survey courses and upper-division courses. Please submit a 2-3-page proposal for the course you are most excited to teach; if we believe, based on students' previous coursework, that a different level for your course would be more appropriate, we will reach out.**

### **Q: What educational background do UPEP students have?**

**A: UPEP students come from a wide range of backgrounds. Our courses are designed to welcome students with different educational histories and life experiences. It is important for UPEP instructors to approach their class with an openness towards differences in students' previous coursework. For example, the same course may have both students who have recently acquired their GED/diploma and students who have prior graduate-level coursework.**

### **Q: Can I assign an expensive textbook for my course?**

**A: When choosing books for your course, please be mindful of the fact that this is an all-volunteer project with limited resources. In the past, course packets and/or older editions of textbooks have worked well. **You can also work with journal articles, short stories, podcasts, and documentary films.****

### **Q: Can I get paid to teach for UPEP?**

**A: This is an unpaid volunteer position. Additionally, please note that driving or carpooling to the prison is required.**

### **Q: When should I submit my materials?**

**A:** For Summer courses, please submit your course proposal and materials by March 15. For Fall courses, please submit by June 15. And for Spring courses, please submit by Oct 15 of the preceding year.

**Q: How does UPEP decide what to teach and when?**

**A:** Our programming operates in five facilities, six days per week. Each instructor teaches 1x/week, and teaching assistants facilitate a study hall on another day each week. We offer courses on a three-semester schedule. Our leadership team chooses courses based on student interest and instructor availability.

**Q: Can I donate books or textbooks to UPEP's library?**

**A:** If you are interested in donating materials or textbooks for an upcoming class, please email [upegp@utah.edu](mailto:upegp@utah.edu). We are unable to accept other book donations at this time.

**Q: I'd like to teach, but I'm also happy to help in other ways. What should I do?**

**A:** When submitting your course proposal, please include a note that lets us know what other skills you have and/or what else you might be interested in helping out with. There are many ways to get involved with UPEP; help us get you in the loop by letting us know your domains of expertise!

**Q: How can I find out more?**

**A:** Much up-to-date information about UPEP is available throughout our [website](#). In particular, you can check out our newsletters for detailed and current information. Please explore our site thoroughly. If you still cannot find the answer to your question, we'd love to hear from you!

Another way to get involved is to send us an email requesting an invitation to our next UPEP orientation. At our semesterly orientation, we discuss our program and current needs. Specific volunteer assignments are often made at this semesterly meeting. Join us!