Correctional Psychology
Who is a Correctional Psychologist?

- Some authors make a distinction between
  - correctional psychologist
  - and a psychologist who works in a correctional facility
- Correctional psychologists are psychologists who have specific training in forensic issues related to corrections.
Who is a Correctional Psychologist?

- The majority of psychologists working in correctional facilities do not have this type of specific training.
- For the purpose of this course, we’ll refer to psychologists who work in correctional facilities as correctional psychologists and the field as correctional psychology.
Correctional Psychology has experienced Tremendous Growth

- First, the prison population has seen explosive growth partly due to the “get tough on crime” approach and mandatory sentencing laws
  - Over 2 million people are incarcerated; this is the highest percentage of the population for any developed country.
Correctional Psychology has experienced Tremendous Growth

- Over 1 in every 100 adults is incarcerated as of 2/08
- Approximately 4 to 5 million people are on probation.
- Of the nine million people incarcerated worldwide, 2 million are in the United States.
- The United States spends over $50 billion annually on corrections
Correctional Psychology has experienced Tremendous Growth

- Second, *deinstitutionalization* in the 1960’s placed a large number of individuals with mental illness back into the community.

- According to the U. S. Department of Justice, between 15 to 20 percent of people in prison are mentally ill.
Deinstitutionalization

- Development of psychotropic drugs in the late 1950’s managed to help control some of the more severe psychotic symptoms.

- The *community mental health movement* of the 1960’s led toward the philosophy of placing people in the “least restrictive environment.”
Many mentally ill individuals in state hospitals were released with little to now follow-up care.

Now many of these individuals are either homeless or in the judicial system.

The Los Angeles County Jail, the Cook County Jail (Chicago) and Riker’s Island (New York City) each hold more people with mental illness on any given day than any psychiatric facility in the United States.
Deinstitutionalization

Due to lack of funds and insufficient programs to handle the large number of deinstitutionalized patients, many of the mentally ill end up homeless.
Purpose of Incarceration

- Traditionally, four goals for incarceration:
  - Incapacitation
  - Retribution
  - Deterrence
  - Rehabilitation

- Briefly discuss each of these goals in the following slides.
Incapacitation

- **Incapacitation**: prevents offender from re-offending

- **Selective incapacitation**: a specific type of incapacitation of particular relevance to forensic psychologists; sentencing based on presumed or predicted dangerousness
Retribution

- A “just-deserts” approach in that a person gets a punishment equal to their crime.

- Originally endorsed by the APA Task Force on the Role of Psychology in the Criminal Justice System in 1978.

- The Task Force may take a different viewpoint if they were to address the issue today.
Deterrence

- General deterrence & Specific deterrence

- General deterrence: general threat of punishment experienced by all citizens

- Specific deterrence: experience of punishment prevents individual from re-offending, experienced by incarcerated individual
Deterrence and Recidivism rates

- Recidivism rates
  - Grand Theft Auto 78.8%
  - Possessing or dealing in stolen property 77.4%
  - Larceny 74.6%
  - Burglary 74%
  - Dealing in illegal weapons 70.2%
  - Rape 2.5%
  - Murder 1.2%

- (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002)
Rehabilitation

- Distinction between treatment and rehabilitation, though closely tied together
  - *Treatment*: treating psychological disorders, sex offenders, etc.
  - *Rehabilitation*: change in behavior patterns; can be psychological interventions, also include education and vocational training program
  - (life skills, anger management, etc.)
Treatment in Correctional Facilities

- American Association of Correctional Psychology (AACP) developed a set of 66 standards for psychological services provided to inmates in correctional facilities.

- Intent is for the improvement of advocacy, accessibility, integrity, quality, and measured effectiveness of mental health care for all offenders – adult and juvenile.
AACP Standards

- **Roles and Services**: consultation, screening of staff, classification of inmates for services, training, assessment, diagnosis & treatment of mental illness, crisis intervention.

- **Staffing Requirements**: At least one doctoral level, licensed mental health professional with correctional psychology experience.

- **Documentation**: In compliance with professional and legal standards.
AACP Standards

- **Confidentiality**: Inmates and staff are informed verbally and in-writing regarding limits of confidentiality.

- **Informed Consent**: All screenings, assessments, treatments are preceded by an informed consent procedure.

- **Employer and Ethical or Practice Standards Conflicts**: Documented policy for resolving conflicts between the facility and psychological staff.
AACP Standards

- **Screening/Evaluation:** Screening provided by qualified personnel and psychological data is handled in a secure manner and not available to inmate workers.

- **Inmate Treatment:** Treatment provided to inmate staff and facilities exist for those needing close supervision.

- **In-service Training:** Procedures exist for the training of facility and community staff regarding psychological services.

- **Research:** Encouraged to conduct research aimed to improving delivery of mental health services.
Challenges for Treatment

- **Physical setting**: overcrowded prisons; poor physical conditions, isolation from family; interruptions in appointments due to transfers, security issues, disciplinary problems, etc.

- **Coercion**: Forced participation in treatment; also found in outpatient court-ordered treatment as with anger management programs or required treatment for domestic violence or sex-offenders.
Challenges for Treatment

- *Issues of confidentiality and privilege communication:*

  limits to confidentiality in a correctional facility involves typical limits such as danger to self or others, disclosure of child or elder abuse but also unique limits such as plans to commit a crime in prison, plans to escape and possession of contraband
Rights of Inmates Regarding Treatment Issues

- **Right to treatment**: constitutional right to receive adequate medical treatment. Has been interpreted to mean adequate mental health treatment; the real issue arises in determining what is “adequate.”

- **Right to refuse treatment**: right to refuse medications, but this can be overridden; the issue most relevant to psychologists regards the right to refuse psychoactive medications and psychological treatment.
Rights of Inmates Regarding Treatment Issues

- Case Law

- Ford v. Wainwright (1986) U. S. Supreme Court ruled that executing a mentally ill person who was unable to appreciate what was happening was unconstitutional.
Role of Correctional Psychologists

- The role of the psychologists is to rehabilitate and reintegrate the inmate back into the community.

- Assess inmates upon incarceration and parole, diagnose and treat mental disorders, provide basic mental health services and prevent development of mental disorders that occur as a response to incarceration.

- Many individuals are treated for depression upon initial entry into the prison system.
Role of Correctional Psychologists

- Provide primarily individual and group treatment using a variety of approaches; typically use cognitive-behavioral approaches, rational-emotive therapy, and reality therapy.

- Treatment of special populations such as substance abusers, individuals with anti-social personality disorder, and sex-offenders.
Careers in Correctional Psychology

- Best to obtain a doctoral degree in clinical or counseling psychology

- Average salary for doctoral level correctional psychologists in Federal Bureau of Prisons is $61,800 and in state correctional facilities average salary is $53,400.

- Benefits are above average including health care and retirement.
Careers in Correctional Psychology

- Also opportunities for master’s-level practitioners with average salary of $40,100; generally than other areas of practice for master’s level clinicians.

- Correctional psychologists report high levels of job satisfaction, though few opportunities for advancement beyond prison administration.
Careers in Correctional Psychology

- Work as part of a mental health team including psychiatrists and social workers along with mental-health counselors.

- Numerous job opportunities:
  - According to Edith King, a forensic psychologist in Oklahoma, “Nationwide, the jails have become the No. 1 holding stop for the mentally ill.”
Web Sites

- International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology
  - www.ia4cfp.org

- American Correctional Association
  - www.aca.org

- Academy of Correctional Health Professionals
  - www.correctionalhealth.org/resources/links.html