

Module 4

MODELING ACCOUNTABILITY

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE LAB

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Module 4

MODELING ACCOUNTABILITY

At a Glance

This module provides an overview of the following topics:

- **The definition and importance of accountability**
- **Distinctions between accountability and punishment**
- **Accountability practices for students in higher education in prison (HEP) programs**
- **Accountability practices for faculty and administrators in HEP programs**
- **Bracing for conflict, resistance, and disengagement**

Guiding Questions

1. **What is accountability, and why does it matter?**
2. **What is *not* accountability?**
3. **What activities, resources, and practices can support student accountability in HEP settings?**
4. **How can HEP programs model accountability for students?**
5. **What accountability practices can help to address conflict, resistance, and disengagement?**

What is accountability, and why does it matter?

Pelsinger[1] explains that **transformative justice** developed in response to the state's limited success in addressing interpersonal violence in meaningful ways. Instead of focusing only on punishment, transformative justice redefines accountability as a process that seeks to change the conditions that allow harm to occur. Grounded in values such as self-determination and consent, this approach relies on community relationships to respond to harm in ways that center those who were harmed while still recognizing the humanity of those who caused harm. At its core, transformative justice

builds networks of care and shared responsibility that support growth and change for everyone involved.

In HEP programs, this framework offers a powerful model for accountability in the classroom. Rather than relying on control, surveillance, or shame, educators can create learning spaces that emphasize reflection, dialogue, mutual respect, and collective responsibility. When students are treated as capable learners and community members, accountability becomes about growth, repair, and transformation, not simply compliance or discipline.

When students in the Restorative Justice Lab's second cohort were asked to define **accountability** before they entered our program, they tended to rely on definitions that were circular:

- "To be held responsible no matter what the situation is."
- "Taking responsibility for one's own actions."
- "Holding someone responsible for their actions."
- "To be held accountable to one's actions."

Their open-ended responses relied on synonyms for "responsibility" as well as active or passive versions of the verb "to hold," indicating that they saw accountability as an external intervention: someone, or something, "holds" someone else accountable through coercion or force.

Our broader culture collapses accountability into punishment on a regular basis. When incidents related to social justice spark community-wide outrage, the public demands "accountability" through criminal charges. Yet accountability, especially when equated with punishment, remains undefined. What is it? Who is positioned to pursue it? How do we know if, or when, it is achieved? Can an accountability process ever be considered complete?

> Prior to RJ, I believed accountability was something done to me. I now believe accountability to be something I hold myself to. In short, the ability to hold myself accountable for the impact my behavior has on others—individuals, community, and society.
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

The RJ Lab's student advisory council developed the following definition of accountability following their work with our program:

> *Accountability includes an awareness and acknowledgment of past harms. It requires us to understand the root causes that led to the harm we caused as well as an understanding of how to address those causes so that the harm does not occur again. It requires us to own our actions as well as the impacts our actions have had on others. It also requires us to think through the consequences of our actions before we act. It is an internal standard—something to which we hold ourselves, not something to which we are held. Accountability starts with the self, but it is also made possible through our relationships. We are accountable to each other because we feel connected to each other. We need to trust each other enough to practice accountability and to ask for help and support when we are falling short. Accountability is not just a legal standard—it is a moral standard.*

This robust definition reflects what Danielle Sered, founder and director of Common Justice, has articulated as the five elements of accountability:

Step 1: Acknowledging responsibility for one's actions.

Step 2: Acknowledging the impact of one's actions on others.

Step 3: Expressing genuine remorse.

Step 4: "Doing sorry": taking actions to repair harm to the degree possible, and guided when feasible by the people harmed.

Step 5: No longer committing similar harm.[2]

These verbs—*acknowledge*, *express*, *do*, and [no longer] *commit*—combine reflection, awareness, communication, and action into an understanding of accountability that results in personal as well as structural transformation. In following these steps, we become people who are less likely to commit harm as we move forward.

They also map onto Mariame Kaba and Shira Hassan's sense that transformative justice ought not to be tethered to conventional concepts of completion and "success":

> *Success is conventionally understood as signifying completion and resolution, as opposed to reflecting the jumble of small victories, uncertainties, and defeats that typify organizing work. There is no such thing as a "successful" accountability process on those terms. At the very least, we hope to mitigate the impact of the harm that has occurred, and prevent it from happening again.*[3]

Instead, Kaba and Hassan adopt a harm reduction model in which "breakthroughs and triumphs" can be celebrated even as we recognize that "each moment of progress is paired with moments of failure or dismay."[4]

Accountability is closely connected to other foundational concepts in restorative practices, including the relationship-building detailed in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*. As adrienne maree brown writes, it is difficult to practice accountability with strangers, which is what the criminal legal system asks us to do: "Accountability is a tricky thing. When I don't believe someone cares about my life—much less my work—I close myself to their critiques. . . . When I know someone loves me and wants to see me thrive, I seek out their feedback."[5] On the other hand, we are not in "right relationship" with others until we are able to practice accountability, which "invit[es] people to be in deeper integrity with their own values and the impacts of their actions, speech, and lives."[6]

> "This course has taught me that accountability is linked to power. Accountability means different things depending on how much power the person or entity has. Worst case: those with lots of power hold others 'accountable' to suit themselves. Best case: human value is exalted and accountability can be substituted by the word love. "
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Accountability is the basis for restorative justice work. The following is a visual aid called "The Accountability Tree," created by an RJ Lab student:



As the visual suggests, accountability functions as the tree roots and storytelling functions as the trunk. The other elements of restorative practices—repair, addressing harm, relationships—emerge from these foundations. Without accountability, we lack the ability to turn inward to analyze what led to our actions and to turn outward to perform the difficult work of repair: "doing sorry," rather than just saying sorry.

What is *not* accountability?

In educational settings, modeling accountability means avoiding practices that rely on humiliation, exclusion, or unnecessary loss. Academic standards should remain strong, but holding students accountable does not require taking away their voice, respect, or sense of belonging.

> "I have learned to trust others more with my accountability and not let criticism be a negative, but a positive."
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Pelsinger[7] also suggests that meaningful accountability is more likely when people still have access to what they need to grow—such as stability, respect, and community support. In the classroom, this can look like responding to mistakes with guided reflection (instead of public shaming), allowing opportunities to revise work (rather than assigning automatic failure), and addressing conflict through dialogue when it is safe and appropriate. These approaches keep academic expectations high while making it clear that accountability is about learning and changing, not punishing or embarrassing.

At the same time, modeling accountability through respect and reflection does not mean removing rules or lowering standards. HEP programs must still follow institutional policies. Clear expectations, consistent rules, and fair grading are necessary. The goal is to combine structure with dignity so that students are held responsible in ways that promote growth rather than shame.[8]

Research on HEP settings shows that students learn best in classrooms where they feel safe to speak openly. When students can share their ideas, question one another, and debate different viewpoints without fear of punishment or retaliation, learning deepens. Teaching approaches that both challenge students and build their critical thinking skills are especially important in prison classrooms. These practices help students become more comfortable with complex issues, understand that problems often do not have simple answers, and remain open to perspectives different from

their own. In this way, the classroom models accountability as thoughtful reflection and respectful dialogue rather than as control or punishment.[9]

Punishments

As Danielle Sered writes, punishment is passive, not active: "When it comes down to it, being punished requires only that people sustain the suffering imposed for their transgression. It recognizes neither agency nor dignity, nor does it require work."[10] Additionally, she writes, "for all the ravages of prison, it insulates people from the human impact of what they have done."[11]

Formerly incarcerated RJ practitioner Felix Rosado writes that "every phase of the criminal punishment system" incentivizes people to minimize, rather than accept, accountability:

> *The moment a pair of cuffs get slapped on, the mission is to evade as much responsibility as possible by exercising the right to remain silent, denying involvement completely, blaming others, or creating an alternative narrative of what happened that could result in the least amount of penalty. Honesty will only land you in a quicksand of trouble. In this particular—and peculiar—context, the truth does not set you free.*[12]

Because the Western criminal legal system is adversarial, criminal defendants are incentivized to deny or mitigate their culpability. When we fear punishment, we learn to fear accountability. Additionally, Western culture considers apologies as weak; studies show that men especially are conditioned to understand apologies as effeminate.[13]

The difference between punishment and accountability matters in HEP classrooms because students are already experiencing extreme punishment. Many scholars define punishment as taking away basic rights or something to which a person is entitled.[14] By contrast, accountability does not require removing someone's fundamental rights. Pelsinger[15] explains that in transformative justice models, accountability is not about deprivation. Instead, it preserves the basic needs and dignity of everyone involved.

Furthermore, accepting punishment is a passive act that is not necessarily tied to reflection, remorse, empathy, or changed behavior. "Central to the problem with punishment is that it is inherently something that is done to us by someone else," Sered writes.[16] Holding or being held accountable does not translate to internal motivation. It does, however, breed fear, resentment, isolation, and mistrust, which are feelings that make it more,

not less, difficult for us to accept accountability because we do not feel safe, loved, or valued.

Call Outs

Call outs, or acts of public shaming, attempt to align the public against a common enemy, and they are embedded in a history of power. As adrienne maree brown writes,

> *Call outs have been a way to bring collective pressure to bear on corporations, institutions, and abusers on behalf of individuals or oppressed people who cannot stop the injustice or get accountability on their own. There are those out of alignment with life, consent, dignity, and humanity who will only stop when a light is shined on their inhumane behavior.*[17]

However, brown warns, "our movements are in danger because we don't know how to handle conflict or how to move towards accountability in satisfying and collective ways."[18] Call outs reproduce the socially stigmatizing logic of the criminal legal system and can be used to shut down, rather than to create, engagement in real dialogue. Often, when we are calling people out, we are missing opportunities for "generative conflict in terms of disagreement and difference, and community accountability/transformative justice in cases of harm and abuse."[19] Instead, we find ourselves participating in "knee-jerk collective punishment" in ways that perpetuate the very systems we say that we are trying to dismantle.[20] When we call someone out, we "share one side of what's happened and call for immediate consequences. And within a day, the call out is everywhere, the cycle of blame and shame activated, and whoever was called out has begun being publicly punished."[21] Call outs, like other harms, can be performative exercises in power that attempt to rally the troops.

Call ins, by contrast, invite people into private dialogue with the goal of aligning actions with a shared vision. We call in people with whom we have established relationships. According to adrienne maree brown, these are "loving and transformative corrections."[22] When we call people in, we approach them with care and sensitivity, and we engage them with respect. We lean on our relationship with them to create space for growth. We can draw on restorative practices such as using feelings and needs statements and asking restorative questions. Most importantly, we create conditions of self-awareness that make it less likely that a conflict or harm will occur again.

The following chart shows examples of the impacts of call outs and call ins.

CALL OUTS	CALL INS
Sever social connections	***Invite*** reconnection through dialogue
Stigmatize through shaming	***Transform*** shame into accountability
Punish the person who caused conflict or harm	***Support*** those who have experienced harm as well as the person who caused harm

Quantifiable Transactions

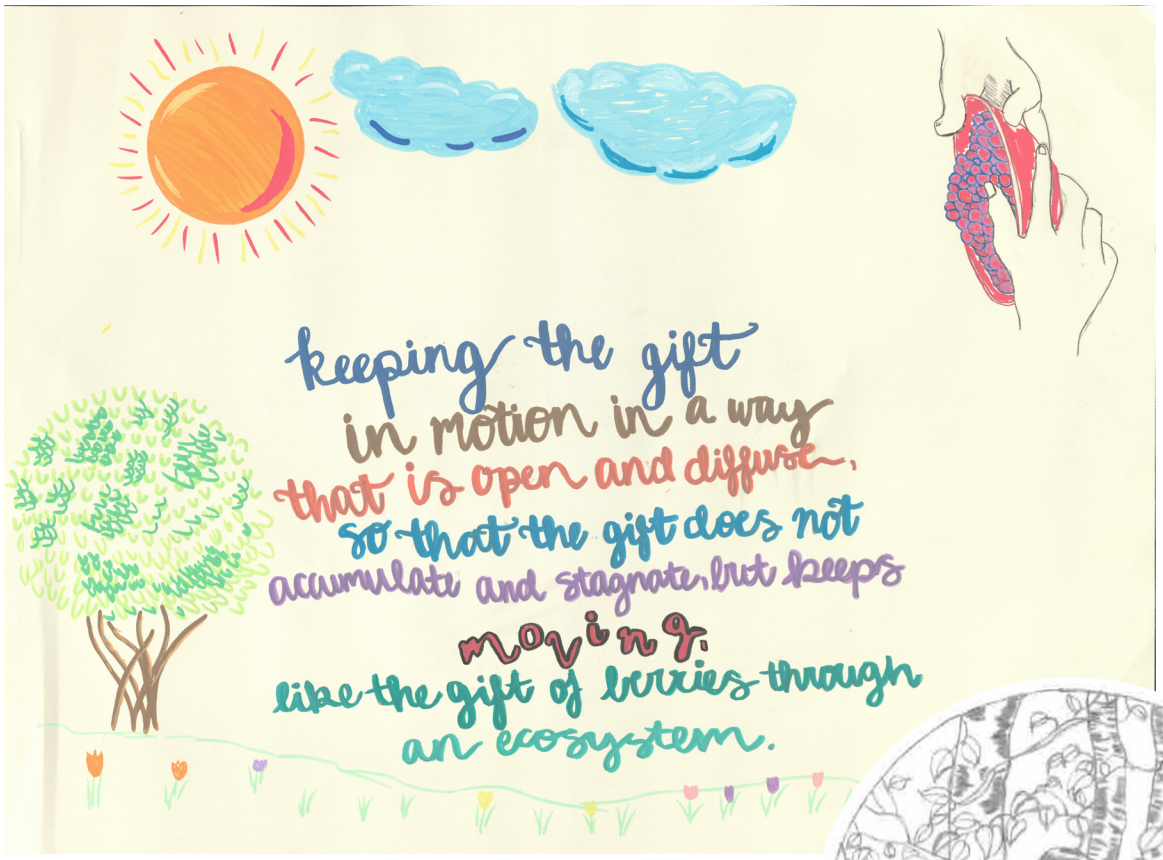
As cognitive linguist George Lakoff has written, we "conceptualize well-being as wealth," a metaphor that causes us to understand moral accounting in terms of financial transactions.[23] A moral action that is intended to help is seen as providing a "gain," whereas an immoral action that is intended to harm creates a "loss." Consequently, accountability is conceptualized as an extension of financial accounting: "Just as literal bookkeeping is vital to economic functioning, so moral bookkeeping is vital to social functioning. And just as it is important that the financial books be balanced, so it is important that the moral books be balanced."[24] By this conception, moral action is quantified into a schema of "moral arithmetic."[25]

Some harms, however, are considered so egregious and create such a mountain of debt that no amount of accounting or repair can balance the books. Lakoff goes on: "The source domain of the metaphor, the domain of financial transaction, itself has a morality: it is moral to pay your debts and immoral not to."[26] Accountability is considered transactional rather than transformational: it is a ratio of credit to debt. When someone incurs a debt that is too large to pay, they are cast as hopelessly immoral. This is the logic that underpins extreme punishment, including the death penalty. By this logic, the only way to balance the books is for the state to take another life. Finally, this metaphor is premised on scarcity: the perception that well-being, like money, is a finite resource to which we either add or subtract.

Robin Wall Kimmerer suggests an understanding of accountability based on an "abundance and reciprocity" framework more aligned with an Indigenous worldview in her most recent book, *The Serviceberry*.[27] "I've never quite understood something about human economics, and that is the primacy of scarcity as an organizing principle," she writes. "Gift economies arise from an understanding of earthly abundance and the gratitude it generates. A

perception of abundance, based on the notion that there is enough if we share it, underlies economies of mutual support."[28] Under the abundance framework, well-being is not only generative but also works through collective action. "Mutualism or reciprocal exchanges create abundance for both partners, by sharing," she writes.[29] When we repair relationships, we do not simply work to eliminate debt; rather, we—like the serviceberry Kimmerer uses as her primary metaphor—create mutual flourishing in ways that cannot be easily quantified or measured.

Below are drawings by RJ Lab students inspired by Kimmerer. The following sketches illustrate abundance and reciprocity in the natural world.







"The importance of taking responsibility for what you think, say, or do only scratches the surface because you can't take accountability without understanding the needs and feelings of others and the impact that your words, actions, and inactions have on them with the knowledge that any one of them can cause harm or do good. You should always hold yourself accountable in both."

– RJ Lab Student

What activities, resources, and practices can support student accountability in HEP settings?

In a study of formerly incarcerated students, Conway[30] found that many participants said their experience in the Boston University Prison Education Program was transformative. Students shared that the way they were treated by faculty—with respect, fairness, and high expectations—helped undo some of the fear and self-doubt shaped by the prison environment.[31] Students also described how mutual respect in the classroom, both among peers and between students and faculty, created a safe and supportive space. They felt free to reflect on their own life experiences and connect them to larger social systems and structures. In this way, the classroom modeled accountability through respect, reflection, and shared responsibility rather than through shame or punishment.

> "HEP can help support accountability by providing clearly defined expectations while also being adaptive to the unique challenge that prison presents."
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Conway[32] highlights the importance of peer-based learning in HEP programs. Activities such as small-group work, open discussions, and student-led exercises give students opportunities to both share their knowledge and learn from one another. When these practices are encouraged, students experience the classroom as a space for growth rather than control. Without collaborative learning, programs risk being viewed as another form of supervision or social control, which can reinforce rather than reduce stigma.

Participants in Conway's study also emphasized that building confidence through the development of critical thinking skills was essential. They valued having a sense of agency in their own learning, especially when reflecting on their experiences. This aligns with broader research on adult education, which stresses the importance of self-direction and ownership in the learning process. Together, these practices model accountability by promoting shared responsibility, reflection, and personal growth rather than compliance.

Activity: Distinguishing Accountability

Overview: This activity asks students to consider where accountability overlaps and differs from similar concepts: punishment, consequences, and justice. It encourages students to work together to explore these conceptual

boundaries through artmaking.

Step 1: *Introduce students to Mariame Kaba and Shira Hassan's definitions of punishment, consequences, accountability, and justice.*[33]

- **Punishment***: Suffering, pain, or loss that serves as retribution. Penalty or fee for wrongdoing.*
- **Consequences***: The results or effects of an action or condition.*
- **Accountability***: Willingness to accept responsibility for one's harmful actions or behaviors.*
- **Justice***: Recognition of harm done, restitution, having resources to begin our healing path, putting in place resources to prevent more harm in the future.*

Step 2: *Break students into groups of four.*

- *Group 1: Punishment*
- *Group 2: Consequences*
- *Group 3: Accountability*
- *Group 4: Justice*

Step 3: *Ask students to review and discuss the definition attached to their assigned concept, and to develop a piece of artwork that represents this concept visually.*

Step 4: *Present and curate for the larger group.*

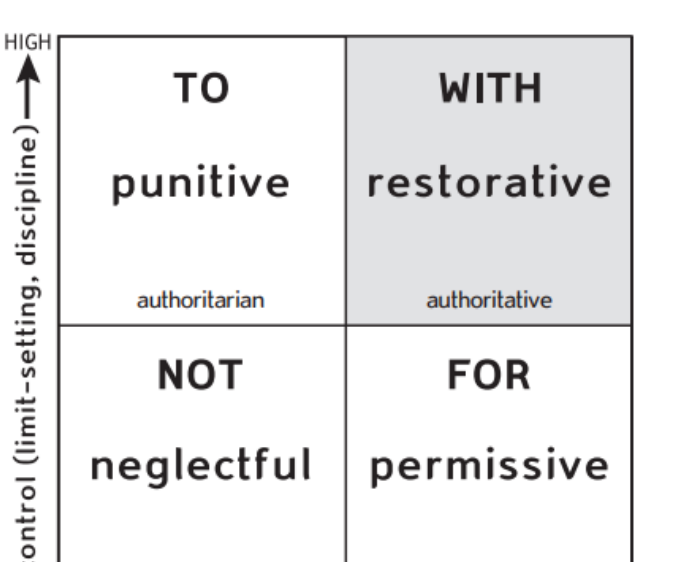
Step 5: *Debrief about the distinctions and overlap among these concepts. Examples of prompts include:*

- *Are there times when we confuse punishment with consequences?*
- *What is the difference between accountability and justice?*
- *Does our broader culture conflate punishment with justice? What are the consequences of this conflation in terms of accountability?*

Resource: Restorative Matrix

One of the foundational premises of restorative practices "is that people (students, teacher and staff) are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in positions of authority (teachers, staff and administrators) do things with them, rather than to them or for them."[34] The International Institute for Restorative Practices developed the following graphic[35] that positions restorative work

as maximizing both boundary-setting and support:



Alternative configurations of this restorative matrix, such as Evans and Vaandering's[36] adaption, change the Y-axis to "expectations" to show that boundary-setting also involves high expectations. We expect that people are capable of self-discipline when we are operating within the upper portion of the matrix. When we carry high expectations but do not support people in meeting them, we operate in a punitive, authoritarian space. When we support people but expect very little from them, we operate in a permissive, paternalistic space. Failing to set any expectations or put any supports in place results in neglect. HEP programs can operate within the restorative portion of the matrix by maximizing expectations and support through accountability work that happens in collaboration *with* students.

Practice: Customized Feedback

Students in the RJ Lab noted that they appreciate the customized feedback we provide on written assignments as well as the notes we deliver during advisement sessions regarding their overall progress in the program.

We use the restorative matrix as a guide for delivering feedback. Providing a grade or assessment without justification would fall under the "neglect" quadrant. Feedback that is framed as "punitive" (do this, do not do that) can cause students to feel defensive and lead them to believe that there are rigidly correct and incorrect ways of demonstrating their learning. However, feedback that is overly "permissive" is not constructive and does not support

student autonomy. We want to empower students to understand that we are here to guide them toward ways in which they can maximize their clarity and communication to show us their intellectual growth.

Empowering phrases include:

- I notice that…
- I appreciate that…
- I am curious about why…
- Have you considered…
- You might consult the student handbook regarding…
- I would like to challenge you to…
- Thank you for…

The following is a chart of pitfalls to avoid, examples of what not to say or do, and the matrix quadrant of the pitfall:

PITFALL	EXAMPLE	MATRIX QUADRANT
Directing criticism toward the person.	"You are not clear" (vs. "Your writing could benefit from greater clarity.")	Punitive
Using coercive language.	"You need to…" (vs. "perhaps consider…")	Punitive
Returning work without comments or feedback for improvement.	Placing a grade on the paper or rubric that is not accompanied by comments.	Neglect
Revising or rewriting the student's work for them.	Marking up a paper with too many corrections (vs. directing students to refer to the handbook).	Permissive

Considerations: In restorative practices, we separate the deed from the doer through a practice called **externalization**. This practice allows the participant to view their action as an external object that does not define them as a whole person. It helps to alleviate shame while allowing the participant to diagnose and solve problems related to the action. When instructors are critiquing assignments, feedback should address the assignment rather than the student. Because consent is an important part of participation and decisionmaking in restorative practice work, we use verbs

such as “consider,” “consult,” and “challenge” to make space for student choice and to offer constructive feedback as an opportunity for autonomy.

Customized feedback also prevents students from flatlining in their growth. In addition to providing feedback on **summative assessments**, we also provide opportunities for peer feedback during **formative assessments** in class. In CJ 260: Introduction to Restorative Justice, students create and perform a Circle in small groups before receiving informal feedback from the rest of the class. Students are encouraged to balance affirmations with constructive feedback, articulating what went well before exploring what areas could be further developed. Formative assessments provide low-stakes opportunities for students to become practiced in receiving and delivering feedback restoratively.

Practice: Student Advisement

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor when they enter the program and advisement sessions are scheduled around the mid-term. Advisement sessions provide opportunities for students to connect and build relationships with faculty beyond their coursework together. They allow program faculty to explore students’ changing feelings, needs, and goals over the duration of their time in the program.

> "Accountability is practiced in our coursework in my opinion by actually engaging in the knowledge we are presented with. RJ is about healing, accountability, and growing in yourself and as a community. Your accountability is holding yourself to getting better at restorative justice outside of class. By making sure we stay focused and on task. "
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Advisement sessions can serve different purposes depending on the type of program. Because everyone in the RJ Lab program takes the same coursework, our advisement sessions did not focus on course selection but on goal setting. We asked students, “What are your academic goals both within and beyond the program, and what support do you need in meeting those goals?” These sessions helped us to develop professional development workshops based on overlapping student needs.

The RJ Lab student advisory council recently informed faculty and staff that, because the facility does not offer larger credentials beyond what we already offer, advisement sessions should be geared toward confidence and relationship-building. As a result, we focus more on conversations that

build trust and enhance our program delivery.

One faculty member provided beautifully tailored feedback for each student who was in her class. Those comments were delivered through the advisors to each student during their advisement sessions. Some students were so impacted by her affirmations that they requested personal copies. As a result, the RJ Lab team has tried to continue this practice through a shared document of running notes that we maintain for each student. We also use a form for guiding our advisement sessions, which we provide in Appendix A. Each advisee is provided a copy.

Not only do we deliver customized feedback during these sessions, we prepare to receive it, as well. We ask students what is working for them, what is not working, and how we can better support their development in the program. Student requests have ranged widely from specific laptop software to additional patience.

Case study

During a student advisement session, one RJ Lab student revealed that he had been in solitary confinement prior to starting our program. The adjustment to our classroom environment and its focus on community-building was a shock to his system. He asked for grace while he worked to adjust to the level of social engagement our program requires.

Practice: Study Halls

The RJ Lab holds weekly study halls to provide students with a quiet place to study, work on assignments, and seek additional support. During study hall, students work in learning pods as described in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*.

Students have access to a class set of laptops to complete their assignments. These laptops include additional resources such as a dictionary and thesaurus as well as software to help them increase their typing efficiency. The team has also worked with JSTOR's Access in Prison Initiative[37] to install a limited version of JSTOR's searchable database. The laptops also have IBM's SPSS Statistics[38] software so that students can navigate their research methods class using the same software for data entry and analysis that researchers use on the outside. Study hall sessions are designed to help students develop their technology literacy.

The program's graduate teaching assistant, student support coordinator, and tutors provide support during each study hall session. Tutors include outside, campus-based tutors as well as inside tutors made up of program alumni from the student advisory council. Tutors assist with organizing, inventorying, and distributing classroom supplies; assisting students with coursework; working one-on-one with students who need additional support; and managing complex classroom dynamics using some of the strategies detailed in *Module 3: Managing Conflict*. Tutors also facilitate study hall sessions using some of the Circle practices that appear in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships* to ground students in a sense of focus and responsibility. These practices include check-in questions that ground students in each session's purpose and invites them to reflect on their goals.

Study hall check-in prompts have included the following:

- How do we practice accountability in our coursework?
- How do we prepare ourselves to be present during study hall?
- What does active listening mean to us?
- What intentions will we set for this study hall session?
- How do we practice asking for help when we need it?

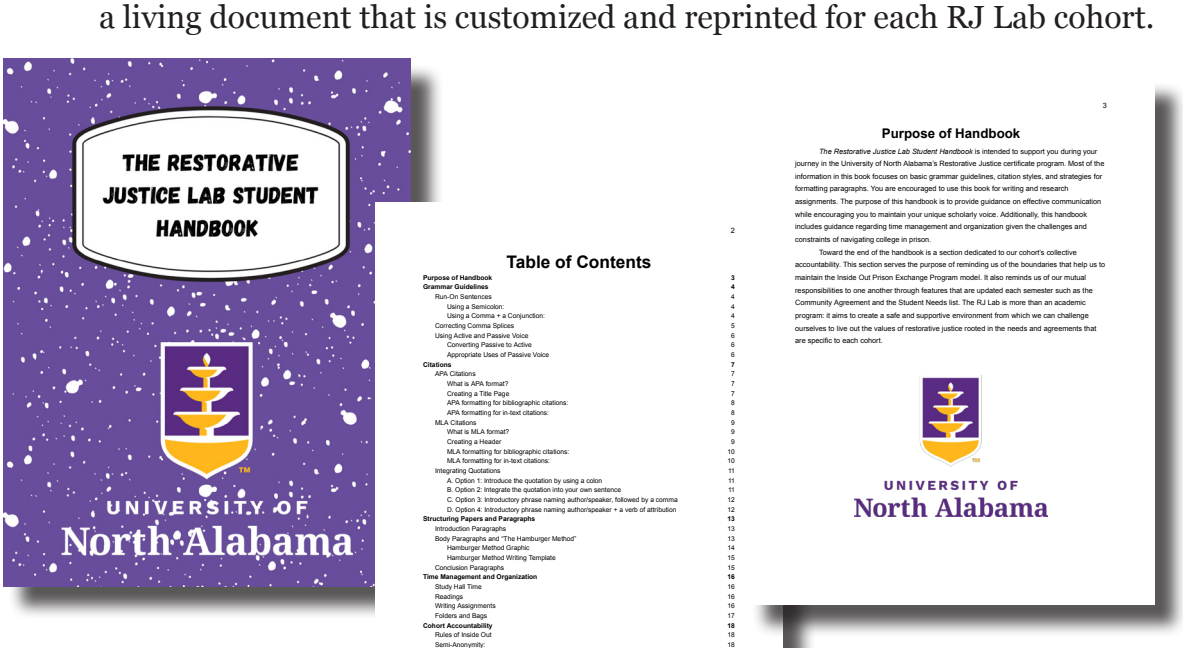
The RJ Lab team developed prompts like these based on our community agreement, detailed in *Module 3: Managing Conflict*. These prompts remind students of their shared responsibilities and to ground students in the restorative quadrant of the restorative matrix—high expectations, high support—at the beginning of each study hall session.

Resource: Student Handbooks

Most universities make student handbooks available online for incoming first-year students. However, students in a carceral setting often cannot access these materials, and many handbook sections are designed for traditional campus experiences. Our university's office of Disability Support Services urged the RJ Lab team to create a student handbook customized for our program so that students had a document that they could continuously reference for assistance with their coursework.

The student handbook reinforces accountability by providing students with access to resources that support them in meeting the expectations of the program. These resources include citation style guides, grammar guides, and infographics to help students organize their thoughts. We include some

of these examples in Appendix B. The handbook also contains specific documents related to accountability, such as the community agreement and the needs inventory that we developed around difficult conversations (detailed in *Module 3: Managing Conflict*). Consequently, the handbook is a living document that is customized and reprinted for each RJ Lab cohort.



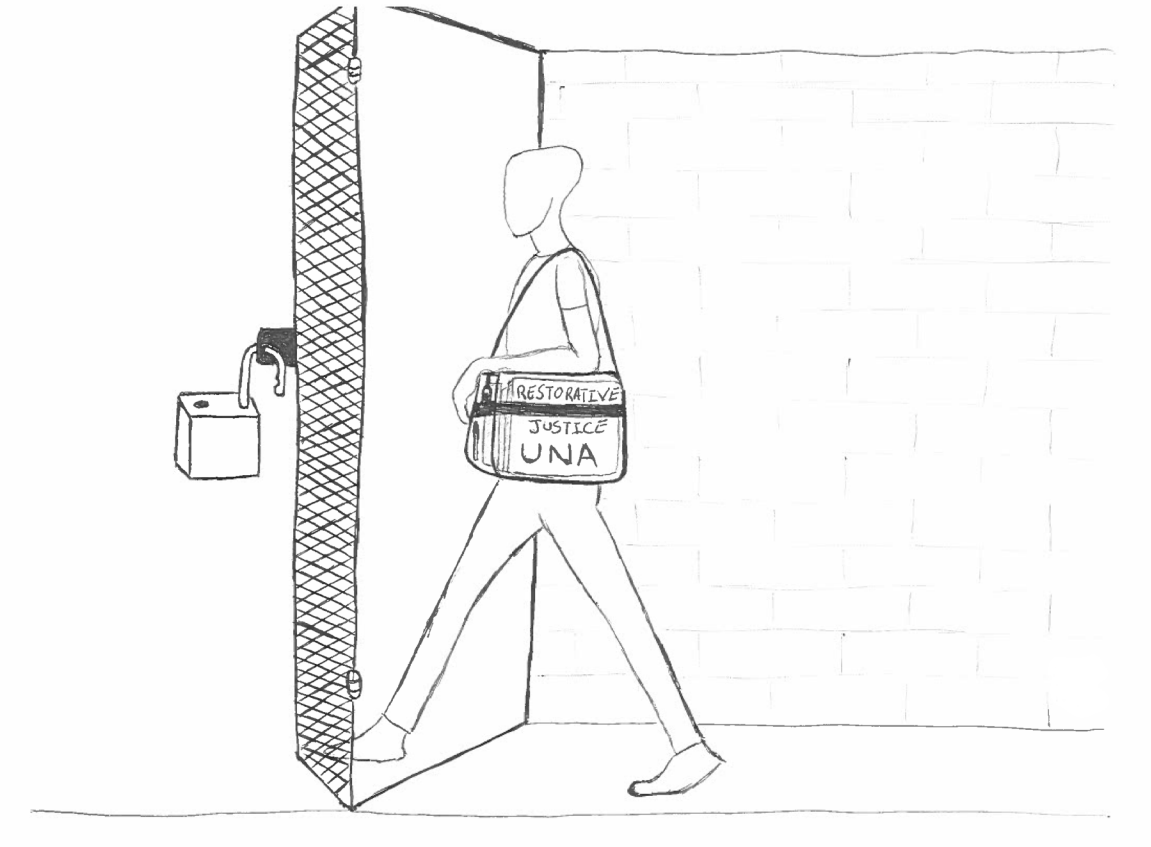
Resource: Supplies that Support Organization and Preparedness

Personal storage space is limited in most facilities, so we have learned over time which supplies work best for students under these constraints:

- Thin one-inch binders with pockets and clear folder dividers
  - ◇ When students take multiple courses during a single semester, this helps them to stay organized.
  - ◇ Prior to using binders, we noticed that students spent a fair amount of time in class shuffling through their clear bags searching for papers and folders.
  - ◇ The student support coordinator provides students with optional weekly or daily agenda sheets to help them organize their schedules and manage their time, which we provide in Appendix C.
- Notepads for workshops and looseleaf paper for binders
  - ◇ Notepads work well for professional development workshops.
  - ◇ Looseleaf paper can be placed in binders for coursework.

- Post-It notes and sticky tabs in different colors
  - ◇ Post-It notes serve many purposes, including as reminder.
  - ◇ Sticky tabs allow students to mark passages in their readings.
- Highlighters
  - ◇ Different colors provide choices in color contrasts for students with low vision.
- Clear bags for carrying class supplies to and from housing units.

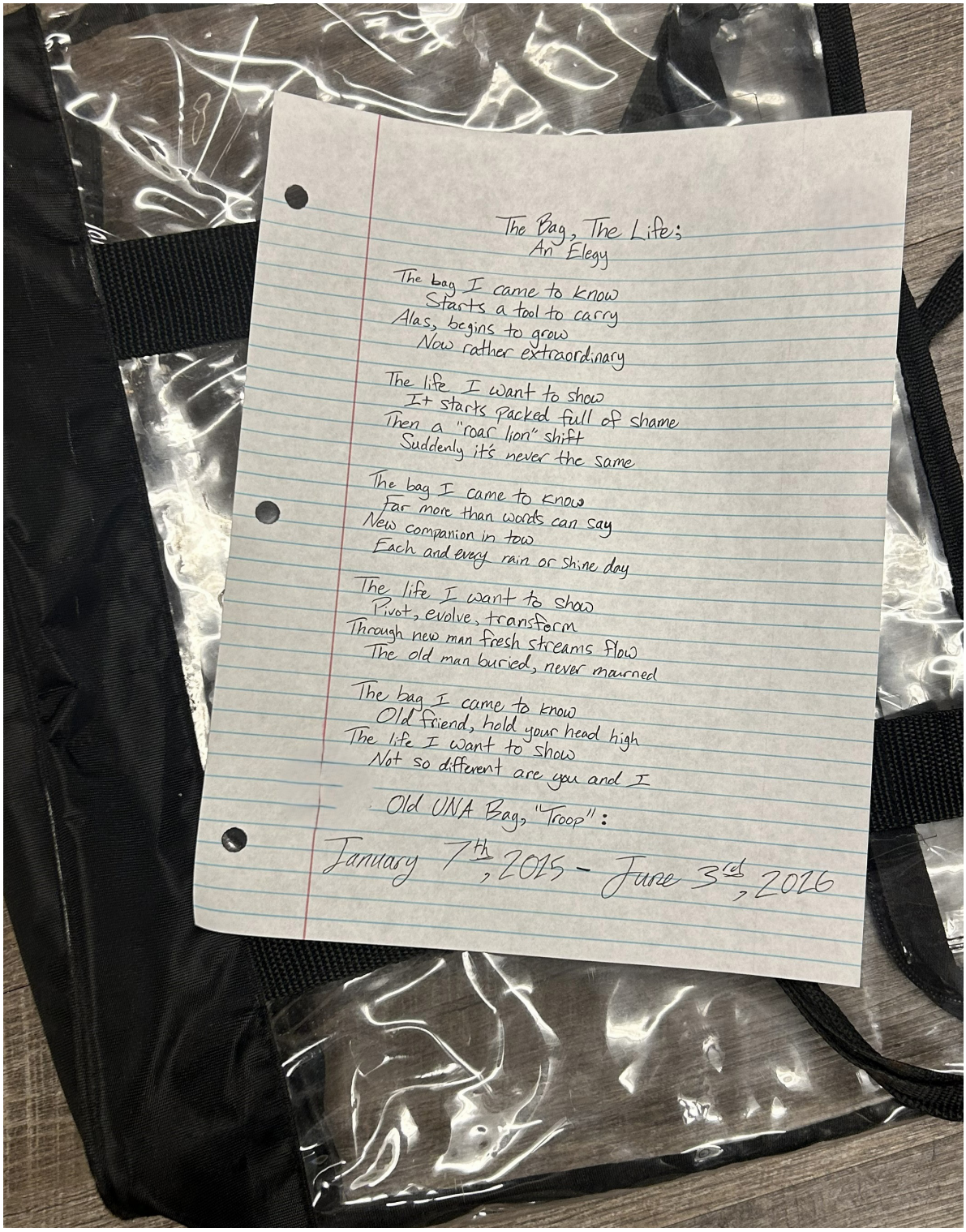
Below is a drawing by a RJ Lab student of how the bags unlock doors both literally and figuratively.



"The bag gives us greater mobility in a maximum security prison where our movements are restricted. The bag means I am a UNA student and it allows me to move through the checkpoints to get to class. It is symbolic. It gives me pride. It also signals accountability: don't mess up that bag for me!"

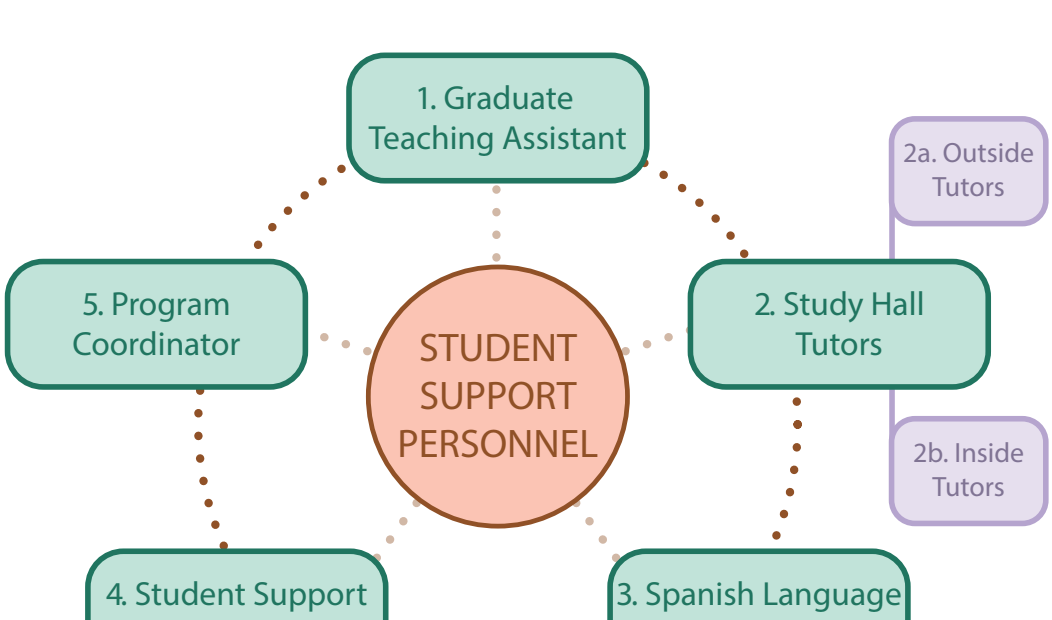
– RJ Lab Student

Below is a poem written by a RJ Lab student who traded in his old, ripped bag for a new one.



Resource: Student Support Personnel

Programs are wise to invest in support personnel who can actively work with students who require additional individualized support or targeted interventions tailored to their circumstances. The RJ Lab has developed five distinct positions for this type of assistance:



1. Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA):

The GTA is embedded within the program's coursework, attending each class and study hall session to assist with course delivery and assessment, occasionally assisting with grading assignments and delivering academic advisement. The GTA also helps to monitor and manage the complex social dynamics of the cohort and communicates with tutors, the student support coordinator, and program faculty about students' academic progress. The GTA creates learning materials for students based on assessment results and works with faculty to develop targeted teaching strategies customized to student needs. A sample mind mapping worksheet, designed to help students to organize their thoughts while crafting their reading reflections, is included in Appendix D.

2a. Outside Study Hall Tutors:

Outside tutors (i.e., campus- and community-based) contract with our program to provide customized academic and social support to our

program students during study hall sessions. They assist with short lessons during study hall workshops and offer feedback on the learning materials developed by the GTA. They work one-on-one with students as well as design short lessons based around the needs of the cohort. They also assist with supply inventory and assessing what additional supplies or software might be needed to support student success. They also document student research requests and submit them to the student support coordinator.

2b. Inside Study Hall Tutors:

Inside tutors (i.e., facility-based) are RJ Lab alumni from our student advisory council who have opted to continue working with our program, as detailed in *Module 5: Opportunities for Continuous Engagement*. They coordinate the internal logistics of the program, maintain a list of students, and ensure that everyone is in attendance. They also set up chairs for class and learning pods and laptops for study hall sessions. They help organize and inventory class supplies and assist with recruitment and retention of students. They also provide support with technology, including the laptops, printer, speaker system, and projector. Because they have taken all of the coursework, they provide invaluable peer support for subsequent cohorts by offering firsthand insight into how they approached their assignments. They also provide students with a consistent point of connection inside the facility for needs that may arise outside of scheduled class time. Finally, they serve as examples of students who have successfully completed the program, motivating current students to remain engaged.

3. Spanish Language Navigators:

Campus-based Spanish majors and English as a Second Language teachers contract with the program to assist in the translation of foundational documents, such as recruitment materials, assessment rubrics, and the student handbook. By collaborating with the navigators, we ensure that program-specific terms, such as those dealing with Restorative Justice, are translated with fidelity. Spanish language navigators may conduct live translations during specific class and study hall times.



4. Student Support Coordinator:

This position, primarily based at the facility, supports current and prospective students in the program by providing additional academic resources to meet their individualized needs. The coordinator supervises program tutors, Spanish language navigators, and the GTA and develops streamlined strategies and responses to the ongoing needs of the program and its students. In addition to daily onsite academic support, the coordinator integrates workshops into the existing curriculum by developing contracts with other HEP practitioners, artists, and consultants; the coordinator also manages travel reimbursements, supplies, and contracts. The student support coordinator participates in recruitment, application review, and interview process for prospective students as well as in the development and delivery of the summer bridge program for new students.

5. Program Coordinator:

This position, primarily based on campus, assists in recruitment and coordination of inside and outside students. While the student support coordinator's role provides academic support, the program coordinator provides administrative support by ensuring that paperwork is completed correctly for guest entry into the facility, that outside students are informed of the Inside-Out model's expectations and Department of Corrections policies, and that inside students are properly registered for classes. The program coordinator also processes travel reimbursements for faculty, staff, and tutors. This position spends a flexible number of hours each week at the facility to work directly with students by assisting with study hall sessions and facilitating student advisory council meetings.

How can HEP programs model accountability for students?

Modeling accountability in HEP programs requires holding two truths at the same time: individuals are responsible for their actions, and those actions are shaped by broader structural conditions.[39] A transformative approach does not excuse harm by pointing only to systemic inequality, nor does it isolate individuals from the social realities that influenced their choices. Instead, it encourages students to examine how personal decisions intersect with systems such as poverty, racism, trauma, and limited opportunity.[40] This perspective aligns with research on prison education that emphasizes critical reflection, peer learning, and the development of agency as central to student growth.[41] In the classroom, this balance is modeled by fostering honest reflection, dialogue, and high expectations.

Students are invited to take responsibility for their growth while also developing a deeper understanding of the structural forces that shape behavior. Accountability, in this sense, becomes both personal and collective because it is focused on agency, awareness, and meaningful change.

> "My view of accountability has changed as I recognize the power of my words, actions, and my story now. I now focus on solutions instead of excuses."
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

In a study based on 35 interviews and focus groups with transformative justice facilitators across the United States, Pelsinger's[42] findings suggest that accountability cannot be forced; it must be chosen. If accountability is something that develops from the inside out, then educational spaces must create the conditions in which students feel safe enough to engage in honest reflection. In HEP programs, this means shifting away from practices that rely primarily on control, shame, or surveillance. Instead, educators can model accountability by extending invitations to reflect, revise, and grow. For example, rather than framing feedback as punishment for mistakes, instructors can frame it as an opportunity for learning and development. When classroom norms are collaboratively established, students are invited into shared responsibility for the learning environment. When conflict arises, structured dialogue and guided reflection can encourage students to examine impact and intent without shame.

At the same time, it is essential to acknowledge that consent and engagement are complex in prison settings. Power dynamics, institutional rules, and social pressures may shape participation. Modeling accountability therefore requires transparency, fairness, and consistency. Educators can hold firm academic expectations while still creating "soft places to land"—spaces in which students can admit error, reconsider assumptions, and grow without fear of humiliation. In this way, prison classrooms can demonstrate that accountability is not about being controlled from the outside, but about developing responsibility and critical awareness from within.

Prisons are highly controlled environments, and this affects how higher education programs operate.[43] Security rules can limit classroom space, restrict materials, and sometimes prevent students from attending class. These conditions shape what instructors and students are able to do. Because of this, strong working relationships between education staff and corrections

personnel are essential. Cooperation ensures that classes run smoothly and consistently. Suggestions on how to navigate these dynamics are detailed in *Module 6: Building and Maintaining Institutional Relationships*.

Even within punitive environments, educators can still model accountability through fairness, clear communication, and respect. While security policies must be followed, classrooms can remain spaces where students are treated with dignity and held to clear expectations. In this context, accountability includes both individual and collective responsibility. Students are responsible for their behavior and academic work; educators are responsible for maintaining clear expectations, upholding fair policies, handling conflict resolution, maintaining professional boundaries, creating conditions that support learning, and consistently following institutional policies to build trust with corrections staff and protect students and instructors.

Alpert et al.[44] explain that prison education programs need strong student support services to help reduce attrition. Services such as tutoring, academic advising, mentoring, and counseling help students stay on track to complete their programs. Offering these supports shows that responsibility is shared. Students are expected to meet academic standards, and programs are expected to provide the tools and guidance students need to succeed. Instead of seeing dropping out as only the student's failure, programs must recognize their role in creating conditions that support persistence. In this way, student support services model accountability as an indication of partnership and shared commitment.

New Student Orientation

The purpose of new student orientation is to prepare students for success by acknowledging and clarifying the roles of two institutions that are nested together in HEP but that were not designed to be compatible: higher education and prison. A strong new student orientation sets clear expectations, establishes stakeholder roles and responsibilities, builds community, clarifies institutional boundaries, and provides direct support for students before the program begins.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS:

Orientation provides clear information about academic policies, grading practices, student rights and responsibilities, and accountability processes. Students receive a handbook and helpful resources, including a glossary of higher education terms, to ensure they understand university expectations and language.

ESTABLISHING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students learn what is expected of them academically and behaviorally, and what they can expect from instructors and staff. This reinforces shared responsibility and introduces students to members of the instructional team.

BUILDING COMMUNITY:

Through introductions and icebreaker activities, students begin to feel welcomed and part of a learning cohort. The goal is to reduce their anxiety, build confidence, and prepare them to begin college-level coursework.

CLARIFYING INSTITUTIONAL BOUNDARIES:

Orientation explains how the program operates within the prison environment, including how institutional policies shape class attendance, materials, and procedures.

PROVIDING DIRECT SUPPORT:

Finally, students are introduced to available support services such as tutoring, academic advising, technology support, Disability Support Services, and library resources to ensure they understand that support is available throughout their academic journey.

Transparent Assessment Tools

Transparent assessment tools promote accountability by clearly defining expectations, aligning assignments with program learning outcomes, and ensuring consistent evaluation across courses. A common rubric that measures integrative thinking and reflection supports fairness, transparency, and shared responsibility for student learning.

RJ Lab faculty developed a common rubric for use on written assignments across HEP curriculum after receiving feedback from an outside consultant urging us to standardize our grading. We include the rubric in Appendix E. Faculty use the common rubric for the duration of the program's coursework, although assessments and evaluations become more demanding as students advance into upper-level coursework. It is expected that students will show greater proficiency and complexity with regard to research, writing, and analysis in the final semester than in the first semester.

The categories in the rubric were designed to align with program outcomes

and to establish balance so that no one category is weighted too heavily. We were also cognizant of creating a category around writing and communication that did not privilege standardized English or prescriptive grammar too heavily. For more on the drawbacks of prescriptive grammar, see *Module 3: Navigating Conflict*, Appendix D.

Statements of Account

Transparency about program funding reinforces accountability at multiple levels. Students understand that the opportunity is the result of intentional investment by supporters who believe in their potential. In turn, the program remains accountable for maintaining program standards, demonstrating measurable outcomes, and using resources responsibly.

Sharing funding sources and funder stakeholders with students creates a sense of transparency and agency. We present these resources to students in the spirit of showing them who is investing in their development and how the HEP program stewards those funds.

Statements of account can include the following:

- Investment breakdown per student (e.g., books, tuition, technology)
- List of funding sources
- Sketch of the program's overall budget

A template for a statement of account is included in Appendix F.

Opportunities for Responsiveness

When students express academic needs—such as requesting additional study materials for study hall—program staff have opportunities to respond thoughtfully and, when possible, provide supplemental resources. This approach reinforces shared responsibility, supports student success, and affirms that student voices are not only valued within the learning community but actively drive it, as well.

Opportunities for programs to practice responsiveness include using the feeling and needs inventories during advisement and talkback sessions at the end of the term (see *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*). Study hall tutors also check in with students each week to address individual needs. They also check in with students before supplies are ordered to see which materials are (or are not) working for them.

A worksheet created by study hall tutors in response to student requests is included in Appendix G.

What accountability practices can help to address conflict, resistance, or disengagement?

Cohorts Redux

The cohort model, detailed in *Module 1: Building a Strong Cohort*, can strengthen accountability in HEP programs.[45] When students move through a program together, they are not learning in isolation. They share goals, support one another, and recognize that their participation affects the group. This creates a sense of shared responsibility.

> My actions impact the dorm– whether we catch store that day, whether we get shook down, whether or not officers are in a good mood.
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Because cohort members see each other regularly and depend on one another for discussion and collaboration, they are more likely to stay engaged and uphold group norms.[46] Accountability becomes relational, not just individual. Students are responsible for their own work and behavior, but they are also accountable to their peers.

For educators, this means that accountability is supported not only through standards and assessments but also through community. A strong cohort structure encourages students to show up, contribute, and respect one another, which reinforces that learning is a collective effort.

Self-Assessments Redux

Self-assessment is an important tool for promoting student responsibility and academic growth. When students evaluate their own effort and performance, they take greater ownership of their learning. Comparing their work to clear criteria or a grading rubric helps them better understand what quality work looks like and what is expected at the college level. Self-assessment encourages students to think about how they learn. For example, students may evaluate their participation in group discussions by reflecting on whether they contributed meaningfully, listened actively, built on classmates' ideas, incorporated course readings, and considered different perspectives—or whether they dominated or interrupted conversation. This type of reflection helps students become more thoughtful contributors and

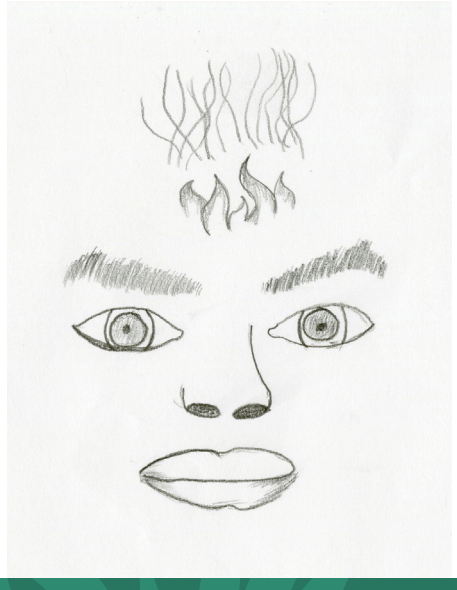
more engaged learners. A self-assessment for student engagement during in-class participation is included in *Module 3: Managing Conflict* and also here in Appendix E.

Through self-assessment, students begin to recognize patterns in their performance by identifying areas of strength as well as areas in need of improvement. This reflection supports accountability by encouraging students to apply feedback and improve on future assignments. It also increases transparency in grading, makes expectations clearer, and reduces stress.

One of the RJ Lab's self-assessment strategies is folded into a check-in exercise that we implement in the beginning of class. We ask students to self-assess where they are on a stress scale, to visually represent their stress, and then to share with a partner. Below are some of the sketches created by students during this exercise.









By integrating self-assessment into HEP programs reinforce accountability as an internal, reflective process that promotes student growth, confidence, and continuous improvement.

> RJ helped me to become a better listener, to kill the "me-me" syndrome, as if everything was about me. It's also helped me to see that I'm not alone. Most of all, it's helped me with my own self-evaluation.
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Community Agreements Redux

Expectations may need to be adjusted as real classroom situations develop. Instructors may need to revisit the community agreement if circumstances arise that require review or revision. For example, if a conflict occurs between students, the class may have to revisit the agreement to strengthen expectations on mutual respect. Even if the agreement does not need to be amended, it is wise to revisit the community agreement periodically as a proactive measure to return everyone's attention to shared expectations and sustained awareness of classroom norms. In the RJ Lab, instructors build creative exercises around the community agreement to engage students so that the agreement still feels fresh.



Exercise #1: *Split the class into small groups. Ask them to identify one item on the community agreement and to develop a skit that they will perform for their classmates without using any words. The class must guess which item they are depicting.*

Exercise #2: *Invite students to rate where they are on a stress scale from 1 to 10 and to draw their rating. Ask them to share their drawing with a partner. Debrief with the class and relate feelings and needs back to the community agreement.*

> All my life, I let life happen to me. I never planned or thought about my future. When I finally honed in on my values and turned them into actions—that was really heavy. When I act out of anger, am I living out my values? RJ has helped me to see my connections with the greater community.
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Communication Among Program Staff

Program staff should maintain consistent and purposeful communication with one another. Weekly or biweekly meetings, either in person or virtual, are recommended to ensure alignment, monitor progress, and follow up on assigned tasks. Regular meetings also keep the team organized and accountable.

Just as the classroom operates under a community agreement, program faculty and staff may develop a team agreement that outlines expectations and shared responsibilities. Clear internal expectations strengthen collaboration and prevent misunderstandings. The RJ Lab's community agreement includes the following categories:

- Self-care
- Mindfulness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Unity and Collaboration
- Communication

Our full community agreement is included in Appendix H as a model for other programs.

RJ Lab program faculty and staff also use project management tools (e.g., Trello, Microsoft Planner, Google Suite) to store documents, assign responsibilities, and track progress. For team collaboration and day-to-day operational coordination, a supplemental group messaging platform (e.g., GroupMe) can streamline informal communication and reduce email overload. Any selected platform should align with institutional policies and confidentiality requirements.

RJ Lab program faculty and staff maintain a shared internal running document of notes from classes, study halls, and student advisement sessions to ensure that we understand complex class dynamics and any barriers to student progress or success. These notes have been helpful in drawing our attention to potential conflicts before they emerge so that we can develop proactive strategies for addressing them as they unfold.

At times, some students may require additional support or attention, but it is important for program faculty and staff to aim for an equitable

distribution of attention and resources for the full cohort. This goal can alleviate frustration among faculty and staff as well as students, and ensures that those students who may not necessarily ask for additional support still receive it through regular check-ins during study hall and class time.

Additional Supports

We assume that students who are resistant to feedback, drift from community agreements, or accumulate class absences require additional support and increased contact with program faculty and staff. If students cannot meet program expectations, even after reminders about the community agreement, they may require more accountability resources such as additional written feedback, additional advisement, an impromptu conference, or an **accountability contract**.

> Justice is a loaded word. RJ helped me to replace it with "repair"—what would it take to right this wrong?
>
> *– RJ Lab Student*

Accountability contracts are initiated by program faculty after individual students express some level of resistance to program expectations. Contracts are created in collaboration with (rather than for) the student. The RJ Lab has developed accountability contracts with students who are missing assignments, missing class, and/or exhibiting signs of isolation that are jeopardizing their success in the program. These contracts may include the following:

- Establishing clear communication regarding missing work
- Setting regular weekly check-ins using the feeling and needs inventory (supplied in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*)
- Completing the wellness and pod mapping exercise (supplied in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*)
- Communicating with the student's advisor
- Creating a plan for academic improvement using SMART [Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely] goals (supplied in *Module 2: Strengthening Relationships*)
- Discussing time management and self-care, and developing additional resources around these practices if needed
- Reaffirming program boundaries and expectations while also reaffirming the student's goals as articulated in their program application essay and advisement sessions

Because these additional contracts are tailored for the student, they demonstrate to the student that accountability is accompanied by individualized attention and care.

RJ Lab program faculty and staff also offer emotional support for students who are experiencing difficult situations in their personal lives when it impacts their academic performance. Common examples include mourning the death of a loved one or experiencing the stress of parenting while in prison. If a student is accumulating absences, withdrawing from the cohort, or seems disengaged or distracted in class, faculty and staff will check in during class breaks. We offer a listening ear, words of affirmation, resource referrals, and/or an assessment of what the student needs to continue attending and participating in class.

We also encourage students to move away from all-or-nothing approaches to coursework, asking students what "percentage" they are able to give today. For example, while a student cannot give 100% on a difficult day, maybe they can strive for 60%. We approach these check-ins without judgment and to offer support academically and through the lens of restorative practices. Sometimes the student requires a "holding space" session, which is detailed in *Module 5: Creating Opportunities for Continuous Engagement*. The goal of these practices is to support and empower students to rededicate themselves to their coursework.

Recap of Module 4: Modeling Accountability

Key takeaways:

- **Accountability is an important practice in HEP programs that supports student growth and success.**
- **Accountability is distinct from punishment, call outs, and quantifiable transactions when placed in the context of transformative justice.**
- **Targeted activities, resources, and practices help to develop and support student accountability within HEP settings.**
- **Program faculty and staff can model accountability through practices of transparency, fairness, and responsiveness.**
- **Program faculty and staff can manage student conflict, resistance, or disengagement by revisiting established accountability practices and developing tailored interventions as needed.**

In the next module, we will explore how we create opportunities for continuous engagement for students as well as for program faculty and staff.

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Appendix A: Student Advisement Form

Guided Student Advisement Form

(To be completed with each student during each advisement session)

Name:_____

Date: _____

1. What are your academic goals within the program? What new goals would you like to set for the upcoming semester?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What are your academic goals beyond the program? Have these goals shifted over the previous semester?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What is your experience in the program so far? E.g., what work styles and study practices have worked well for you so far, practices that have not worked as well, etc.

4. Have you experienced any shifts or changes since starting the program? E.g., change as an individual, student, community member, shifts in your understanding, etc

5. What is something we should know about you to help better support you in this program? E.g., have there been any changes in your living situation, daily routine, personal challenges, etc.?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Are there any additional resources we can provide to support your academic progress?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

For faculty member:

*Faculty will print Canvas grade report prior to advisement session
*Faculty can prepare customized feedback prior to advisement session

Appendix B: RJ Lab Student Handbook Cover, Table of Contents, and Purpose



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Purpose of Handbook

The Restorative Justice Lab Student Handbook is intended to support you during your journey in the University of North Alabama's Restorative Justice certificate program. Most of the information in this book focuses on basic grammar guidelines, citation styles, and strategies for formatting paragraphs. You are encouraged to use this book for writing and research assignments. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance on effective communication while encouraging you to maintain your unique scholarly voice. Additionally, this handbook includes guidance regarding time management and organization given the challenges and constraints of navigating college in prison.

Toward the end of the handbook is a section dedicated to our cohort's collective accountability. This section serves the purpose of reminding us of the boundaries that help us to maintain the Inside Out Prison Exchange Program model. It also reminds us of our mutual responsibilities to one another through features that are updated each semester such as the Community Agreement and the Student Needs list. The RJ Lab is more than an academic program: it aims to create a safe and supportive environment from which we can challenge ourselves to live out the values of restorative justice rooted in the needs and agreements that are specific to each cohort.



UNIVERSITY OF
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Appendix C: Time Management Worksheets

24-HOUR DAILY PLANNER

Date and Month

MORNING HOURS (A.M.)

5:00	
6:00	
7:00	
8:00	
9:00	
10:00	
11:00	
12:00	

AFTERNOON HOURS (P.M.)

1:00	
2:00	
3:00	
4:00	
5:00	
6:00	
7:00	
8:00	

Appendix D: Mind Mapping Worksheet

Reading/Discussion Mind Map

Use the space below to freely map out your main takeaways from the assigned reading and class discussions. Make sure to include evidence from the text to support your ideas.

Title of Reading:

Main Idea: What is the main idea of the chapter(s) you read?

Textual Evidence: Provide direct quotes from the reading that support the main idea.

Textual Analysis: Explain the importance of the direct quotes you chose.

Definitions: Provide definitions for words from the text you are unfamiliar with.

Questions: Provide questions you have about the reading.

Appendix E: Common Rubric for Program

For Class Engagement (Student Self-Assessment):

	HYPER-ENGAGEMENT	BALANCED ENGAGEMENT	STILL WORKING TOWARD ENGAGEMENT
Contribution to learning community	I think I spoke a lot today without leaving space for others. I will work on balancing speaking with listening.	I participated at least once today without dominating discussion. I respectfully engaged with other students' contributions. I balanced listening and speaking for an equitable classroom dynamic.	I participated during the check-ins and check-outs but did not participate during class discussion. I am still finding my footing when it comes to classroom engagement.

For Written Assignments (Instructor Assessment of Student Work):

	5	4	3	2	1
Critical thinking and interpretation	Assignment contains clear, precise analysis (rather than summary), complexity of thought, and the development of multiple original ideas.	Assignment contains clear, focused analysis (rather than summary), well-developed thoughts, and attempts to vary ideas.	Assignment demonstrates some analysis but needs more practice in avoiding summarizing. Assignment would also benefit from greater complexity and variety of ideas.	Assignment demonstrates surface-level analysis that would benefit from greater originality, complexity, and variety in ideas.	Assignment contains repetitive, vague generalizations and more summary than analysis.
Writing and communication	Assignment conveys ideas clearly using effective grammar as a communication tool. Writing is well-organized using paragraphs for each main idea and topic sentences with supporting details.	Assignment shows a solid understanding of grammar and language. Ideas are generally communicated clearly but would benefit from reorganization.	Assignment shows a basic understanding of grammar and language rules but would benefit from reorganization.	Assignment would benefit from greater attention to grammar and language as well as organization of ideas for clarity.	Assignment is difficult to read or comprehend due to grammatical and organizational confusion.
Focus and accuracy	Assignment responds to the prompt by addressing each component and remaining on topic. Assignment is the appropriate scope and length.	Assignment responds to the prompt by addressing each component. Assignment should focus on meeting the appropriate scope or length requirements.	Assignment responds to the prompt by addressing some, but not all, components.	Assignment responds to the prompt but should address all components with greater specificity.	Assignment does not respond to the prompt.
Research, evidence, and citation	Assignment references class readings using the appropriate and correct citation style (APA, MLA). Assignment contains a strong original and analytical voice while also paraphrasing and referencing secondary material where appropriate.	Assignment references class readings using the appropriate and correct citation style (APA, MLA). Assignment also paraphrases and references secondary material but would be enhanced by a stronger original and analytical voice.	Assignment references class readings using the appropriate citation style (APA, MLA). Assignment also paraphrases and references secondary material but not consistently throughout the paper.	Assignment would benefit from greater practice with citation styles (APA, MLA). Assignment shows understanding of secondary material but relies too heavily on these materials in place of analysis.	Assignment makes little or no reference to class readings using the appropriate citation style (APA, MLA).

Appendix F: Statement of Account

Statement of Account

Our investment in your education (per student, per semester)

Tuition and Fees:			
Tuition:	$____/credit hour x	____ credit hours =	$_____
Course fees:	$____/credit hour x	____ credit hours =	$ _____
		Your cost:	***$0***
Books and supplies:			$_____
		Your cost:	***$0***
Technology:			
Laptop and headphones for duration of program:			$ _____
		Your cost:	***$0***
Total cost per student:			$_____
		Your cost:	***$0***

Thank you to our funders:

_____

We invest in you because we believe in you! We look forward to seeing you flourish in the program!

Appendix G: Quotation Integration Worksheet

Textual Analysis with Quotation Integration

This exercise prepares students to make interpretive claims supported by textual evidence and to integrate direct quotations into their sentences while maintaining their own voice.

The following is an excerpt from William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*:

> *He [Jack] knelt, holding the shell of water. A rounded patch of sunlight fell on his face and a brightness appeared in the depths of the water. He looked in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger. He spilt the water and leapt to his feet, laughing excitedly. Beside the pool his sinewy body held up the mask that drew their eyes and appalled them. He began to dance and his laughter became a bloodthirsty snarling. He capered toward Bill, and the mask was a thing on its own, behind which Jack hid, liberated from shame and self-consciousness… The mask compelled them. (1954, pp. 63-64)*

Part I: Using the Reading/Discussion Mind Map to help you work through the questions, carefully consider the excerpt and answer the following questions.

1. Main Idea: What was the first thing you thought of after reading the excerpt?

   Example: The first thing I thought of after reading the excerpt was how people often mask their true selves in order to survive unsafe situations, which can sometimes lead to trauma and a loss of the true self.

2. Textual Evidence: Which sentence stands out to you the most?

   Example: "He looked in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger."

3. Textual Analysis: What do you think the sentence means?

   Example: I think this sentence represents the manifestation of trauma and the loss of the true self, leading Jack to become something "appalling" and "compelling" to his peers.

4. Definitions: What words are you unfamiliar with? Does knowing the meaning of those words change your understanding of the sentence?

   Example: I was unfamiliar with the words "sinewy" and "capered." I do

feel that researching the definitions helped me to better understand Jack's character and his movements during this scene.

5. Questions: What questions could you ask to expand your understanding of the sentence?

   Example: Why did Jack feel he needed a mask? Does he no longer recognize himself at all? How is Jack both "liberated" and "hid[den]" behind this mask?

6. Using the answers provided above, write a paragraph (3-5 sentences) analyzing your chosen sentence.

   Example: Jack looking in astonishment at himself shows the way he has lost himself to the danger of the wilderness. In order to survive and lead, he had to change himself, and ultimately succumbed to the trauma he faced. In many ways, this is similar to the experience of people who become incarcerated.

7. Evaluate your paragraph and decide on the best place to insert your sentence.

   Example: The narrator describes Jack as "looking in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger," which symbolizes the way he has lost himself to the danger of the wilderness. In order to survive and lead, he had to change himself, and ultimately succumbed to the trauma he faced. In fact, he no longer recognizes himself. In many ways, this is similar to the experience of people who become incarcerated.

Part II: reread the excerpt and choose a second, related sentence that will help you expand on your previous paragraph. Using the Reading/ Discussion Mind Map again, answer the following prompts.

1. The narrator states "[quotation]," which I took to mean…

   Example: The narrator states "He [Jack] looked in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger," which I took to mean that Jack had lost his true self behind the mask.

2. When the narrator described "[quotation]," I thought of…

   Example: When the narrator described Jack as "looking in astonishment, no longer at himself but at an awesome stranger," I thought of the way people often do this without realizing when trying to adapt in dangerous situations.

3. Using quotation integration (as modeled in Examples 1-2), write 3-4 sentences using your quotation.

   Example: The narrator describes Jack as "looking in astonishment, no longer

at himself but at an awesome stranger," which symbolizes the way he has lost himself to the danger of the wilderness. In order to survive and lead, he had to change himself, and ultimately succumbed to the trauma he faced. In fact, he no longer recognizes himself. In many ways, this is similar to the experience of people who become incarcerated.

4. Pick a second, related quotation and, using the quotation integration from Examples 1-3, write 3-5 sentences analyzing it. Try to expand on your first paragraph.

   Example: The narrator describes Jack as "beginning to dance… his laughter becoming a bloodthirsty snarling," signifying the way the mask has taken over. This further ties in the way people sometimes change when put into unsafe situations, which ultimately can lead them to becoming like the very people who put them into the situation. Jack's delighted laughter becoming a bloodthirsty snarl shows the audience that this is what has happened to him.

Appendix H: Community Agreement, RJ Lab Faculty and Staff

Community Agreement
RJ Lab Faculty and Staff

Note: This is a living document that can be updated at any time.

Self-Care:

- Knowing how much we can take on (knowing our limits).
- Creating realistic expectations.
- Being honest about what we can handle.
- Prioritizing sustainability to avoid burnout—to do this for the long haul, we must have healthy boundaries.

Mindfulness:

- Being mindful of our own preferred working styles—whether we work best independently or benefit from being accountable to someone else, such as through regular check-ins with a team member.
- Offering the option to work independently.
- Remaining student-centered—students are at the center of the toolkit and our program.
- Reaffirming each other of our positive work (shoutouts at the end of meetings).
- Offering option to work independently; adding to Trello or sending to group afterward so that our work can be reviewed by group.

Respect:

- Showing up to meetings on time.
- Showing up with updates on what we've been working on.
- Participating in conversations.
- Reviewing the agenda and being familiar with what we're discussing.
- Crafting a place where everyone is mutually respected and valuing what everyone can bring to the table.

Responsibility:

- Understanding we share a common goal, and we can help each other achieve that.
- Remembering it is our responsibility (as a group) to make progress toward deadlines and project deliverables.
- Conceiving of responsibility as a shared, collective responsibility that is flexible enough to accommodate individual peoples' needs.
- Being comfortable asking for help and giving it.
- Remembering that if we encounter any challenges with our contribution, we will communicate them as soon as possible so that the appropriate support can be provided.
- Clarifying tasks so everyone is on the same page.

Unity and Collaboration:

- Sharing understanding of the program and shared buy-in.
- Understanding why we're doing this.
- Using collaborative platforms like Trello and Google Docs for group work.
- Holding productive and purposeful meetings.
- Remembering that if we cannot attend a meeting, we still check in with everyone and update everyone.
- Holding spontaneous check-in meetings as needed.

Communication:

- Communicating with each other and ourselves about our limits.
- Communicating through GroupMe with updates if our deadlines change or if we need additional help.
- Text messaging for more urgent concerns.
- Remembering that if we miss a meeting or are late, we should review the notes in the agenda.
- Checking Trello for notifications.


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