

**REAP (ReEntry Acceleration Program) Immersion Syllabus Overview**  
 Columbia Business School, Management B8580: 001 –  
 Fall 2017, Thursdays 10:34 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. (Warren 416)

#### INSTRUCTOR AND TA BIOS

Damon J. Phillips is the Lambert Family Professor of Social Enterprise and Co-Director of the Tamer Center for Social Enterprise. He also teaches entrepreneurship at the MBA and undergraduate level, as well as PhD coursework. His experience before academia includes teaching GED math and working in a family high tech manufacturing business whose employees included people with criminal records.

[Natasha Korgaonkar](#) is a former civil rights litigator, law school adjunct professor, and current MBA student. She has a BA from Brown, MA from Columbia, and a JD from Columbia Law School.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

REAP (ReEntry Acceleration Program) Immersion is a new full semester course designed to introduce current and future business leaders to the impact of the U.S. criminal justice system on employment and entrepreneurship prospects for formerly incarcerated people. We will explore both the challenges of our correctional system as well as potential solutions. **The core organizing activity of the course will be teaching business skills to currently and formerly incarcerated people.**

#### BREAKDOWN OF TOPICS

The readings here are included not only to give you a greater context as you teach in prison during the fall, but also to provide greater depth that you can use as our society's next generation of business leaders.

In each of the 12 sessions you will spend 20-30 minutes checking in with your teaching teams, with the remaining time of the class in a plenary discussion. During the plenary we will discuss general matters of teaching at the correctional facility, updates from each team, the readings or videos for the day, or listening and engaging with a guest speaker. Topics we will cover are:

- Teaching in Prison
- Considering the Bigger Picture (What is the Prison Industrial Complex?)
- The Societal Cost of Mass Incarceration
- Columbia University's Role and CBS's Contribution
- Debtor Prisons, the Bail Trap, and Civil Death
- Particular Challenges for Incarcerated Women
- Transitional Challenges of Formerly Incarcerated People
- Understanding the Evidence on Reentry Programs (How will we know if we are successful?)
- "Ban the Box", Criminal Background Checks
- Employer Mindsets, Incentives, Challenges, and Solutions
- Entrepreneurship Opportunities

Here are background/optional readings to inform you about the mass incarceration crisis and give you the background to communicate with others in this space (listed chronologically):

- *Random Family*, (Adrienne Nicole Leblanc 2004) ([New Yorker article](#) which follows up on the book 10 years later)
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, especially Ch. 5 – (Michelle Alexander 2010)
- *Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex* (Kevin Wehr and Elyshia Aseltine 2013)
- *Just Mercy* (Bryan Stevenson 2015); [One Lawyer's Fight for Young Blacks and 'Just Mercy'](#) (NPR 38:29 minute interview for *Just Mercy*)
- *13<sup>th</sup>* (Ava DuVany 2016). An award-winning 1hr 40 mins documentary available on Netflix.