



Higher Education in Prison (HEP) Survey





ABOUT US

STEM-OPS is an NSF Eddie Bernice Johnson INCLUDES Alliance working to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities in prisons and supporting access to STEM (broadly defined) for those who are directly impacted by the carceral system.



FOR MORE INFO

Contact Vanderbilt University's Initiative for Race Research and Justice.

This material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation under Cooperative agreement No. INCLUDES-1931045. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.













STEM-OPS HEP Survey

This survey was developed by formerly incarcerated people who participated in Higher Education in Prison programs and is designed to help evaluate such programs, better understand the needs of people participating in them, and identify strategies to maximize their impact.

The goal of this survey is to gather insight on the experiences of Higher Education in Prison program participants and use the knowledge gained from these insights to improve practices and expand opportunities and access to effective HEP programs, particularly those programs related to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

Participation in this study includes completion of this survey. The ideal participants are HEP program alumni and current HEP program participants. We are specifically interested in those who have participated in STEM-focuses HEP programs, although any HEP program alumni or participants may complete this survey.

Risks associated with participation in this survey are minimal. The information collected from this survey will be anonymous and used solely for the purpose of research and knowledge generation. Potential benefits of participation include access to higher quality and more impactful HEP programs and broader access to STEM careers for justice impacted persons.

We are committed to maintaining your privacy, so only members of the research team will have access to these data. If you do not complete the survey, this website will record the answers you did provide. All participant identities will be anonymous and all data reporting will be aggregated to protect participants' privacy.

By continuing, you are affirming that you are at least 18 years of age, have participated in or are currently participating in a Higher Education in Prison program, and are consenting to the use of data collected from this survey for research and knowledge generation purposes.

Q1 What racial or ethnic category do you identify with?
American Indian or Alaskan Native (1)
O Asian (2)
Black or African American (3)
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (4)
O Hispanic or Latino/Latine (5)
White (Non-Hispanic) (6)
Multi-racial (7)

Q2 What gender classification do you identify with?
○ Male (1)
Female (2)
O Non-binary / third gender (3)
O Prefer not to say (4)
Q3 What is your current age (years)?
Q4 Are you currently incarcerated?
O No (1)
○ Yes (2)
Q5 How many total years were/have you been incarcerated?
Q6 In which state do you currently reside?
▼ Alabama (1) I do not reside in the United States (53)
Display This Question: If Q5 = Yes
Q7 In which state do you participate in your Higher Education in Prison program?
▼ Alabama (1) I do not reside in the United States (53)
Display This Question: If Q5 = No

Page 2 of 18

Q8 In which state did you participate in your Higher Education in Prison program?
▼ Alabama (1) I do not reside in the United States (53)
Display This Question: If Q5 = No
Q9 Did you participate in a Higher Education in Prison program focused primarily on a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) field?
O No (1)
O Yes (2)
Display This Question: If Q5 = Yes
Q10 Do you participate in a Higher Education in Prison program focused primarily on a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) field?
O No (1)
O Yes (2)
Display This Question: If Q10 = Yes
Q11 Did you continue taking STEM-related courses on a college campus after you were released?
O No (1)
O Yes (2)
Display This Question: If Q10 = Yes
Q12 Do you plan to or currently work in a STEM-related career?
O No, but planning to (1)
O No, not planning to (2)
O Yes, currently working in STEM (3)
○ Yes, planning to work in STEM (4)
Display This Question: If Q10 = No

Q13 Do you plan to or currently work in a field related to your Higher Education in Prison program's focus?						
O No, but planning to (1)						
O No, not planning to (2)						
O Yes, currently working in my HI	EP program	field (3)				
O Yes, planning to work in my HE	EP program f	ield (4)				
Higher Education in Prison Program	Experience					
The following section will ask questions	related to yo	our experience	e in your High	ner Education	in Prison	
program(s).						
Display This Question: If Q10 = Yes						
Q14 Please indicate how strongly you a Support :	agree or disa	gree with the	following stat	ements about	Academic	
эиррогі.	Strongly	Somewhat	Neither			
	disagree (1)	disagree (2)	agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	
Participation in my higher education in prison program experience prepared me to pursue graduate studies in a STEM-related field. (1)	0	0	0	0	0	
I feel confident that the instructors who taught classes in my higher education in prison STEM program used the same curriculum that is offered to traditional/ "free world" STEM students. (2)	0	0	0	0	0	
During my higher education in prison STEM program experience, I had access to libraries and STEM-related research materials to complete assignments. (3)	0	0	0	0	0	
During my higher education in prison STEM program experience, I had access to technology resources to complete assignments. (4)	\circ	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	
During my higher education in prison STEM experience, I was provided high quality academic support. (5)	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ	

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
After I was released from confinement, the faculty of my higher education in prison STEM program provided me with academic support. (6)	0	0	0	0	0

Display	This	Ques	stion:
If C	0.10 =	= No	

Q15 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Academic Support**:

Support.			Neither		
	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Participation in my higher education in prison program experience prepared me to pursue graduate studies in a STEM-related field. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
I feel confident that the instructors who taught classes in my higher education in prison program used the same curriculum that is offered to traditional/ "free world" students. (2)	0	0	0	0	0
During my higher education in prison program experience, I had access to libraries and research materials to complete assignments. (3)	0	0	0	\circ	0
During my higher education in prison experience, I was provided high quality academic support. (4)	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
After I was released from confinement, the faculty of my higher education in prison program provided me with academic support. (5)	0	0	0	0	0

Display This Question: If Q10 = Yes Q16 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Leadership Development**:

Development.	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
After being released from confinement, efforts were made by my higher education in prison program to assist me in finding employment in a STEM-related field. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
Prior to my release from confinement, participation in my higher education in prison program enabled me access to high quality STEM-related leadership development opportunities that I feel are now useful to me in society. (2)	0	0	0	0	0
I feel confident that my suggestions to expand the academic offerings of my higher education in prison STEM program were considered for implementation. (3)	0	0	0	0	0
Participation in my higher education in prison STEM program created opportunities for me to develop relationships with mentors in STEM whose support I am able to rely upon after being released. (4)	0	0	0	0	0
During my higher education in prison STEM program participation, opportunities were made available for me to engage with students who were enrolled in STEM-related programs on the free-world/outside campus. (5)	0	0	0	0	0
During my higher education in prison STEM program participation, opportunities for students to earn credits by serving as teaching assistants in STEM-related courses are made available by the STEM program administration. (6)	0	0	0	0	

Display This Question: If Q10 = No Q17 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Leadership Development**:

•	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
After being released from confinement, efforts were made by my higher education in prison program to assist me in finding employment in a related field. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
Prior to my release from confinement, participation in my higher education in prison program enabled me access to high quality leadership development opportunities that I feel are now useful to me in society. (2)	0	0	0	0	0
I feel confident that my suggestions to expand the academic offerings of my higher education in prison program were considered for implementation. (3)	0	\circ	0	\circ	0
Participation in my higher education in prison program created opportunities for me to develop relationships with mentors whose support I am able to rely upon after being released. (4)	0	0	0	0	0
During my higher education in prison program participation opportunities were made available for me to engage with students who were enrolled on the freeworld/outside campus. (5)	0	0	0	\circ	\circ
During my higher education in prison STEM program participation, opportunities for students to earn credits by serving as teaching assistants are made available by the program administration. (6)	0	0	0	0	0

Q18 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Re-entry**:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Coordinated efforts are made by the administration of my higher education in prison STEM program for alumni to attend regular meetings and/or plan group events and activities. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
Participation in my higher education in prison STEM program enabled me access to reentry support that was provided by program personnel whose specific role was to provide reentry support. (2)	0	0	0	0	0
The faculty of my higher education in prison STEM program provided the necessary support for me to continue my enrollment in a STEM-related program on the "free world" campus after being released. (3)	0	0	0	0	0
My STEM program participation enabled me access to internships and/or employment opportunities in STEM-related fields. (4)	0	0	\circ	0	\circ
I feel that my higher education in prison STEM program provider works to establish partnerships with local community organizations that specialize in reentry initiatives. (5)	0	0	0	0	0

Q19 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Re-entry**:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Coordinated efforts are made by the administration of my higher education in prison program for alumni to attend regular meetings and/or plan group events and activities. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
Participation in my higher education in prison program enabled me access to reentry support that was provided by program personnel whose specific role was to provide reentry support. (2)	0	0	0	0	0
The faculty of my higher education in prison program provided the necessary support for me to continue my enrollment on the "free world" campus after being released. (3)	0	0	0		
My program participation enabled me access to internships and/or employment opportunities in STEM-related fields. (4)	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ
I feel that my higher education in prison program provider works to establish partnerships with local community organizations that specialize in reentry initiatives. (5)	0	0	0	0	0

Q20 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Teaching** and **Learning**:

and Learning.	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I feel confident that the program staff and faculty of my higher education in prison STEM program evaluated the course offerings and program curriculum for racial equity and diversity. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
The professors who taught classes in my higher education in prison STEM program represented a racially and culturally diverse group of scholars. (2)	0	0	\circ	0	\circ
Lectures or information imparted during classroom discussions sparked STEM-related conversation with other people in the general population. (3)	0	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
I gained confidence about my future in education because my higher education in prison program provider prioritized hiring professors who were demographically representative of the student population. (4)	0	0	0	0	\circ

Display This Question: If Q10 = No

Q21 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **Teaching** and **Learning**:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I feel confident that the program staff and faculty of my higher education in prison program evaluated the course offerings and program curriculum for racial equity and diversity. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
The professors who taught classes in my higher education in prison program represented a racially and culturally diverse group of scholars. (2)	0	0	0	0	0

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Lectures or information imparted during classroom discussions sparked conversation with other people in the general population. (3)	0	0	0	0	0
I gained confidence about my future in education because my higher education in prison program provider prioritized hiring professors who were demographically representative of the student population. (4)	0	0	0	0	0
STEM Career Experience The following section will ask questions r	related to you	ur experiences	in your STE	M career path	nway.
Q22 Please indicate how strongly you ag	gree or disag	ree with the fo	llowing state	ments:	
	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
My voice is valued in my STEM area or program. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
I am able to direct my work in my STEM area. (2)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I feel my contributions can enhance my STEM community. (3)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Others in my STEM community let me know (by word or action) that when I speak up, it enhances the community as a whole. (4)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
When I engage in my STEM area, I feel personally enriched and rewarded (5)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I feel I belong in my STEM community. (6)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Others in my STEM community let me know (by word or action) that I am important to my STEM community. (7)	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ
I feel my work makes a difference in					

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I feel my work, knowledge, or experiences are important to share with others in my STEM field. (9)	0	0	0	0	0
Others in my STEM field/community look to me for help. (10)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc

K-12th Grade STEM Experience

The following section will ask questions related to your experiences in STEM-related courses in elementary through secondary school grades.

Q23 Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about **your school (K–12th grade) experiences with STEM**:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I experienced effective STEM teaching and learning experiences in school. (1)	0	0	0	0	0
My interests in STEM were higher in elementary school than in middle and high school. (2)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
My STEM learning opportunities were greater in elementary school than in middle and high school. (3)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	0
My STEM learning opportunities were greater in middle and high school than in elementary school. (4)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I experienced strong STEM learning support such as tutoring outside of the classroom. (5)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	0
I was sent out of the classroom most often in math and science classes. (6)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
My STEM interests were identified and honored in school. (7)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Most of my teachers were white. (8)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc
I was well introduced to the language of STEM in school. (9)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I was made to believe I could be successful in STEM in school. (10)	0	0	0	0	0
I believe school suspension is directly related to student knowledge and learning about STEM in school. (11)	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
I felt embarrassed in STEM courses. (12)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I felt well supported in STEM. (13)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc

Q24 Please give each statement a score in terms of how anxious you generally felt during each situation. Using the scale, select the number which you think best describes how you feel.

	1 - No anxiety	2 - Low anxiety	3- Some anxiety	4 - Quite a bit of anxiety	5 - High anxiety
	1	2		4	5
Having to complete a worksheet by yourself ()	!		-		!
Thinking about a math test the day before you take it ()	!		-		
Watching the teacher work out a math problem on the board ()	!		-		
Taking a math test ()	!		-		
Being given math homework with lots of difficult questions that you have to hand in the next day ()	!		-		
Listening to the teacher talk for a long time in math class ()	!		-		
Listening to one of your classmates explain a math problem ()			-		!
Finding out you are going to have a surprise/pop quiz when you start your math lesson ()			-		!
Starting a new topic in math ()	ı		-		!

Q25 Please complete the following statement with each item below, giving each item a score based on how much you generally agree with the statement:

Before math class, I usually feel...

20.0.0 main sias	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Excited (1)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Curious (2)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Nervous, restless, or tense (3)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	0
My heart racing (4)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Thirsty (5)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc
Weak or tired (6)	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ
Super focused (7)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
A churning feeling in my stomach (nauseous) (8)	0	0	\circ	0	0
A headache (9)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Angry (10)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Calm (11)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Overwhelmed (12)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Worried (13)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Unexplainably sick (14)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ

Q26 Please complete the following statement with each item below, giving each item a score based on how much you generally agree with the statement:

During math class, I usually feel...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Excited (1)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Curious (2)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Nervous, restless, or tense (3)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
My heart racing (4)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Thirsty (5)	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ
Weak or tired (6)	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Super focused (7)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
A churning feeling in my stomach (nauseous) (8)	0	0	\circ	0	0
A headache (9)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Angry (10)	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ
Calm (11)	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ
Overwhelmed (12)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Worried (13)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Unexplainably sick (14)	0	0	\circ	0	0

Q27 When is the last time you remember loving math?
C Elementary School (1)
○ Middle School (2)
O High School (3)
○ I've ALWAYS loved math (4)
I've NEVER loved math (5)
Q28 Without solving the problem below, how do you feel looking at this math problem?
O Bring it on (I'm ready to solve it)! (1)
I think I can solve it (2)
I'm not sure but willing to try (3)
I do not think I can solve it (4)
Never show this to me again! (5)
Q29 If these questions were regarding science classes, my answers would generally be:
O Very similar (1)
O Somewhat similar (2)
O Somewhat different (3)
O Very different (4)
O I'm not sure (5)

Q30 Please give each statement a score based on how much you generally agree with the statement. Using the scale, select the number which you think best describes how you feel.

During	math	class	in	K-	12:
--------	------	-------	----	----	-----

During main class in IX-12.	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I felt I was safe and could let my guard down (1)	0	0	0	0	0
I felt comfortable with asking questions (2)	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
My teacher generally encouraged me to ask questions (3)	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc
My teacher always made the material relatable (4)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ
I never felt like the math content was relevant to me (5)	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc
My teachers generally made me feel good about my math work (6)	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc
I felt embarrassed if I didn't understand something (7)	0	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ
I felt angry during math class (8)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
I felt hopeless during math class (9)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\bigcirc
I received the most disciplinary consequences (10)	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ
I received the most commendations (e.g., praise, accolades, rewards) (11)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ

Q31 Please give each statement a score which you think best describes how you feel.

Strongly Somewhat Neither Somewhat Strongly disagree disagree agree nor agree agree disagree

I consider myself a "math person" ()	
I love math, but my experiences in math class kept me from pursuing STEM ()	

Q32 If these questions were regarding science classes, my answers would generally be:
O Very similar (1)
O Somewhat similar (2)
O Somewhat different (3)
O Very different (4)
O I'm not sure (5)
The survey is now complete. Thank you for your time, effort, and thoughtfulness!
You may close this window.