

Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison Membership Statement

(taken from IL-CHEP By-laws)

IL-CHEP is a coalition of programs and educators dedicated to providing higher education opportunities for people who are incarcerated in Illinois. We strive to support our students as they build meaningful lives and prepare for a successful future in civic life. Equally important, we encourage public dialogue and action to reduce our state's and country's reliance on incarceration.

I. Membership

We are critical educators and students advocating for change to our justice system and challenging the racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and more that undergird mass incarceration in the US. Our meetings are open to all and who are interested in university-level education for those who are incarcerated.

Official membership is available to those actively working in higher education in jails or prisons (or related organizations) and promoting the values listed above. Membership is also available to formerly incarcerated individuals who have taken part in educational programs while in prison or jail or who have interest in college-level learning for people who are incarcerated.

Membership in IL-CHEP can be institutional or individual or both and must be voted on by existing IL-CHEP members. For voting purposes, every individual member will have one vote and each organization represented will have one vote, and no individual can vote twice on any IL-CHEP issue. Therefore, one representative of a member group will vote for the group, and that individual will not be allowed to vote again even if he or she is an individual member. The other members of the organization, if official individual members, can vote on their own behalf but not on behalf of the organization as a whole.

Institutional membership will involve an annual donation of \$100 to IL-CHEP and active involvement in IL-CHEP as well as more general advocacy for higher education in prison. "Active involvement in IL-CHEP" will be defined as representation at a minimum of two of the four yearly meetings (representation can come from different individuals involved with the institutional member) and taking part in IL-CHEP-sponsored or related activities throughout the year.

Individual members will make annual donations of \$25 to IL-CHEP, or whatever the member can afford. It will also involve taking part in at least two meetings for the year and being involved in IL-CHEP-sponsored or related activities.

Affiliate membership in the group will involve non-voting privileges to individuals and groups who advocate for the values listed above and who wish to take part in IL-CHEP meetings and contribute to the group's mission.

IL-CHEP also reserves the right to invite guests to our meetings who will not have voting privileges but who will help keep us informed about local, state, and national issues. Such guests will be approved by the executive officers and submitted to the group before each meeting.