

Log Number 13-013

**Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board  
for the Protection of Human Subjects**

**Human Subjects Review Protocol**

**1. Principal Investigator**Name Kyle Ward Department CriminologyPosition/Rank Graduate Student E-Mail Address: K.C.Ward@iup.eduAddress 101 N. 1<sup>st</sup> St Apt 36, Indiana, PA 15701Phone where you can be reached during the day 267-231-6564Date of Submission 1/22/13**2. Co-Investigator (e.g. thesis/dissertation committee chair; use a second sheet for any additional names):**Name Jen Roberts Department CriminologyPosition/Rank Professor Office Phone 724-357-5933Address Wilson Hall, Room 205 E-Mail Address jroberts@iup.edu**3. Project Title: Rural Reentry: College Students' Perceptions of Recently Released Offenders****4. Check only one:**Thesis  Dissertation  Pilot Research (RTAF not required) Faculty Research  Student Research  Staff Research Dates during which project will be conducted: From 1/22/13 To 1/22/14**5. A. Project Funding Source: Check as many as apply:**

External Grant: Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

IUP Grant

Non-funded research

Other

JAN 23 2013

**B. If grant funded, application deadline or date of transmittal \_\_\_\_\_**  
(Please submit one copy of grant proposal as soon as it is available).

6.

**\_\_\_A. PURPOSE, RESEARCH VARIABLES, AND POPULATION**

**Purpose of the study-** The current study investigates IUP student's perceptions of recently released prisoners. The students will be categorized based on where they are from: an urban or rural environment, with the overall goal testing if students from rural areas view ex-offenders differently than students from urban areas.

**Background-** The field of prisoner reentry was formed by criminologists and policy makers as a way to combat the high recidivism rates that plague our country's corrections system (Travis, 2005). As inmates are released from prison, they often face an uphill battle in successfully reintegrating with society and desisting from further sanctions. Most of the research on reentry addresses the intertwining problems with employment, housing, and mental health and substance abuse issues (Petersilia, 2003; Travis, 2005). Government funding and policies have been put in place to aid in the reentry process for ex-offenders, but they are often focused in urban communities. Rural areas face additional problems for formerly incarcerated individuals on both to social and structural level (Wodahl, 2006). There is distrust in outsider help and family centered orientation in rural areas may lead to more negative views of those with a criminal record (Wodahl, 2006). The current study investigates differences in perceptions of ex-offenders from college students who are from rural or urban communities. Based on previous prisoner reentry research addressing differences in rural and urban areas (Robertson, 1997; Wohahl, 2006), it is hypothesized that students from rural communities will be less accepting of formerly incarcerated individuals. Because rural reentry is a field of limited research, differences in perceptions could identify another barrier faced by inmates reintegrating back into rural communities that differentiates them from their urban counterparts.

**Characteristics of the Subject Population-**The following information should be provided:

- a. **Age Range-** IUP undergraduates will be included in the current study. No specific age range is desired, but it is expected that most respondents will fall between ages 18 to 24. Students under the age of 18 will be directed not to participate.
- b. **Sex-**There is no restriction on the sex of the respondents
- c. **Number-**A total of 2,000 students will be emailed a link to a Qualtrics survey. I am hoping for a response rate of at least 10%.
- d. **Inclusion Criteria-** All IUP students who were raised in the state of PA will be included in the current study.
- e. **Exclusion Criteria-**Students who were not raised in PA will be excluded from the current study. Students will be grouped based on which PA county they were raised in and then cross referenced with the Center for Rural Pennsylvania's classification of rural and urban counties to group students into being raised in either a rural or urban county. Because this information is not known in other states, those students will be excluded from the current study.
- f. **Vulnerable Subjects-** No vulnerable subjects will be included in the current study.

**\_\_\_B. METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

**Method of Subject Selection-** Describe the study's method(s) of identification and recruitment of prospective subjects.

The current study will utilize Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) undergraduate students from Pennsylvania as the unit of analysis. Because the nature of this study is exploratory in nature, college students serve as an adequate sample for preliminary analysis. College students will be surveyed in this study because of the availability of such a large group of individuals from both rural and urban areas. Students at the IUP will serve as an adequate sample for this study as IUP is a medium state institution with diverse students from various parts of the state of Pennsylvania.

Using IUP college students as the population, a simple random sample will be drawn of undergraduate IUP students. This sample will come in the form of email addresses of students provided by the Applied Research Lab at IUP. The Applied Research Lab has access to software that, with IRB permission granted, can obtain a random sample from all undergraduate email addresses at IUP. Because only students from Pennsylvania will be utilized in the study, a recruiting email that is sent out to the students will be addressed for only students who were raised in Pennsylvania to answer. The first item on the survey will also include a screening question for only students raised in PA to continue on with the survey.

**Study Site-** This study will take place using the online tool Qualtrics. A random sample of IUP undergraduates will be sent the survey via their IUP email addresses.

#### **Methods and Procedures Applied to Human Subjects-**

A cross sectional survey design will be implemented in this study. College student's perceptions of ex-offenders will be measured using a 10-item scale constructed by the researcher. Because no scale measuring public opinion of ex-offenders was found in the literature, one was constructed for this study. The students will be separated into two groups based on whether they grew up in an urban or rural county.

Survey methodology was chosen for the current study as it is the most succinct way to collect information from a large group of people in a short amount of time. The respondents will be asked to respond to a short survey of approximately 20 questions. To obtain a measurement of college student's perceptions of formerly incarcerated individuals, a 10-item scale was developed for the current study. Asking questions relating to the major topics in prisoner reentry as well as general perceptions toward crime control and punishment, the instrument measures broad opinions toward ex-offenders. In addition to the scale items, there are eight other questions asked that will be used as independent variables in the study. These include that county the respondents were raised in, age, gender, race, major, academic year, and the amount of criminology courses they have taken. In addition, the respondents will be asked if they know anyone who had served time in jail or prison and if they have noticed if they had been treated differently. These questions will serve as control variables in the analysis. Additionally, the survey begins by asking if the student is a resident of the state of Pennsylvania. If answered affirmatively, the student is asked to identify the county. This information is only used to determine if the student was primarily raised in a rural versus urban county.

#### **C. RISKS/BENEFITS**

**Potential Risks-** Identify the potential risks of the study. There are no foreseeable risks in the current study. This study merely asks about students opinions.

**Potential Benefits** There are no direct benefits to the participants. The current study is exploratory in nature, used to determine if there are differences in public perception of ex-offenders in college students. Results of this study could lead to future research on a wider scale that identify rural resident's perceptions of formerly incarcerated individuals.

**Compensation for Participation**-No compensation will be used in the current study. Participation is completely voluntary

**Alternatives to Participation**-Participants can opt out of taking the survey with no penalty. There are no other alternatives to participation

**Information Withheld**-No information will be withheld from the participants

**Debriefing**-No debriefing procedure is necessary in the current survey. Participations will be thanked for their participation at the conclusion of the study.

#### **D.** CONFIDENTIALITY

All Information will be gathered from the online survey tool Qualtrics and all of the respondent's information will be completely anonymous. Data will be gathered and analyzed in the aggregate, with no individual responses used in the presentation of the data.

#### **E.** COPY OF CONSENT FORM

Survey participants will see the informed consent page at the first page of the survey. They will need to click the "agree" button at the bottom of the page to move on to the survey. The informed consent can be seen in Appendix B below.

7. **Protected Populations and Sensitive Subjects:** If any Human Subjects from the following list would be involved in the proposed activity, place an X next to the category.

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> minors  | <input type="checkbox"/> fetuses      | <input type="checkbox"/> pregnant women    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> test subjects for                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> abortuses    | <input type="checkbox"/> illegal behavior  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> new drugs or clinical devices                       | <input type="checkbox"/> incarcerated | <input type="checkbox"/> mentally disabled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> educationally or economically disadvantaged persons |                                       |  |

8. **Nature of Risk.** In your judgment, does your research involve more than minimal risk? "Minimal risk" means that the risk of harm anticipated in the proposed research is not more likely than those risks encountered in daily life, or during routine physical or psychological examinations/tests.

Yes                       No

9. In your judgment, does your research fall under one of the six exempt categories? (List of Exempt Categories attached.) If you believe it does, indicate the number of the category under which you are claiming an exemption.

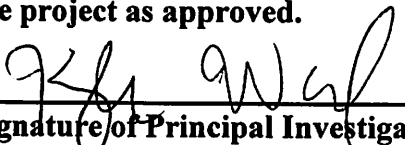
No.

10. Does your project fall under one of the categories eligible for expedited review? (List of Expedited Review Categories attached.) If you believe it does, indicate the number of the category under which you are claiming expedited review.

Yes: category 2

11. Additions to or changes in procedures involving human subjects as well as any problems connected with the use of human subjects once the project has begun must be brought to the attention of the IRB.

I agree to provide whatever surveillance is necessary to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected. I understand that I cannot initiate any contact with human subjects before I have received approval/or complied with all contingencies made in connection with the approval. I understand that as the principal investigator I am ultimately responsible for the welfare and protection of human subjects and will carry out the project as approved.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator/Program Director

1/23/13  
Date

12. Approval by Faculty Sponsor (**REQUIRED FOR ALL STUDENTS**):

I affirm the accuracy of this application, and I accept the responsibility for the conduct of this research and supervision of human subjects as required by law. **THE PROPOSED PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE THESIS/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Date 1/23/13

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**FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY**

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**DEPARTMENT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

**This project:**

- poses minimal risk.**
- poses greater than minimal risk.**
- is Exempt from Continuing Review.**
- requires Expedited Review.**
- requires full IRBPHS Review.**

**Signature**

**Date**

**IRBPHS:**

**Approved to Proceed \_\_\_\_\_**

**Disapproved**

**Signature**

**Date**

Appendix A: Survey  
Perceptions of Recently Released Offenders

Directions: This survey addresses general opinions toward individuals who have previously served time in prison. Please read the following questions/statements and select the answer that you believe best applies to you.

PA1 Did you grow up in Pennsylvania?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

PA County: What Pennsylvania County did you mainly grow up? \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the following statements and select the answer that you believe best applies to you.

1 I would knowingly choose to live next to someone who has served time in prison.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

2 I would knowingly choose to work with someone who has served time in prison.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

3 I believe ex-convicts should have the right to vote.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

4 I believe ex-convicts should be eligible for government grants for college.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

5 I believe questions relating to a person's criminal history information should be asked on employment applications.

- Strongly Agree (4)
- Agree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)

6 I believe an employer should be able to deny employment to an individual based solely on the person's criminal history.

- Strongly Agree (4)
- Agree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)

7 I believe landlords should be able to deny housing to a potential tenant based on their status as an ex-convict.

- Strongly Agree (4)
- Agree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)

8 I believe that time served in prison is enough of a punishment for those who are convicted of crimes.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

9 I believe there should there be a registry for every criminal offender.

- Strongly Agree (4)
- Agree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)



10 I believe that all ex-convicts should inform their community of their crimes.

- Strongly Agree (4)
- Agree (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)

11 Do you personally have any friends or relatives who have served time in a prison?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Answer If 11 Yes Is Selected

12 1. Have you noticed that this individual was treated different by members of society after they were released?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Answer If 12 Yes Is Selected

13 Could you please provide an example? \_\_\_\_\_

D1 What is your gender?

- Male (0)
- Female (1)

D2 What is your current age? \_\_\_\_\_

D3 What is your current academic standing?

- Freshman (0)
- Sophomore (1)
- Junior (2)
- Senior (3)

D4 What race or ethnic group do you most identify with:

- Caucasian (1)
- African American (2)
- Other (3) \_\_\_\_\_

D5 What is your major? \_\_\_\_\_

D6 How many criminology classes have you taken? \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for filling out this survey. If you have any questions feel free to email them to [grbs@iup.edu](mailto:grbs@iup.edu).**

## Appendix B

### INFORMED CONSENT

You are invited to take part in survey as part of a research project I am conducting as a doctoral student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The following information is provided in order to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask to email [k.c.ward@iup.edu](mailto:k.c.ward@iup.edu).

The purpose of this study is to understand how IUP students perceive inmates or ex-convicts who have recently been released from prison or jail back into the community. Questions will be asked using the online survey tool Qualtrics and should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. You will be asked questions about your perceptions of recently released offenders and related topics.

All information you share will be kept anonymous. None of your responses can be traced back to you. All of your information will be used as aggregate data, to be compared with other respondents.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can stop taking the survey and exit your browser at any time.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please indicate so by clicking on the "agree" box on the bottom of the page.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact the investigator and/or the faculty sponsor using the email address listed below.

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This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).