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## FIU-DCI Teaching Exchange

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In Fall 2019, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching at FIU partnered with Exchange for Change to facilitate a reading group and letter exchange between eight instructors from FIU's Writing and Rhetoric Program and eight incarcerated teachers at Dade Correctional Institution. Once a month during the semester, FIU and DCI teachers read a common text on teaching and wrote a response to a peer in the other group. Monthly meetings were then held at DCI and CAT to discuss the readings and response letters. Nick Vagnoni facilitated meetings with inside teachers at DCI and Erica Caton facilitated meetings with FIU teachers at CAT.

In order to provide equal points of entry for all members of the conversation, readings included articles by incarcerated teachers from *Critical Perspectives on Teaching in Prison: Students and Instructors on Pedagogy Behind the Wall* (ed. Rebecca Ginsburg, 2019) as well as by Ken Bain's *What the Best College Teachers Do* and bell hooks's *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. The main points of connection in both groups' responses to these texts included the necessity of empathy and care required for good teaching, and the frequent feelings of imposter syndrome regardless of one's position or credentials.

Grounded in the belief that continuing one's education is a human right, the project had several intended goals: to provide teachers from both groups opportunities to cultivate, reflect on, and share their evolving teaching identities; to improve limited access to pedagogical resources available to incarcerated teachers and students; to support E4C's larger goal of "preparing prisoners for their reentry into the outside community and preparing that community for their return;" and to further CAT and FIU's mission to support the larger communities in which they exist. Due to the restrictive nature of prison life, facilitating meetings and letter exchanges was challenging, but this pilot provided many insights for future exchanges. Given that there are inside facilitators teaching subjects outside of writing, there are also opportunities to try similar exchanges with faculty in other FIU programs as well.