

# Project Newgate: The First Five Years

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*The Minnesota Newgate program uses full-time college work as part of a comprehensive service that includes classes within the correctional institution, group counseling, and, upon parole, transfer to a halfway house on the University of Minnesota campus. The program's aim is to orient the student toward a promising career; it provides each participant with intensive group guidance and support as he undertakes unfamiliar tasks and new roles; and it bridges the transition from the correctional institution to the community.*

*This article describes the Newgate Program and examines its first five years.*

In 1836, an English prison chaplain named John Clay wrote, "It was once a truth so fully realized as to become proverbial that a criminal came out of prison worse than when he went in." In its 1973 report, the National Commission on Standards expanded on Clay's condemnation, "The American correctional system today appears to offer minimum protection for the public and maximum harm to the offender."

Project Newgate, an experimental educational project launched in 1969 by the University of Minnesota in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Corrections, sought answers to two major questions:

1. Could prison inmates with high academic ability benefit from higher education?
2. Could higher education play a significant role in enabling prison inmates to achieve a more satisfying lifestyle and, to that extent, reduce the crime danger to the public?

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