

Professional Leave Report Cover Sheet

Name: Tinneke Van Camp

Department: Criminology

College: Social Sciences

Leave taken: Sabbatical Difference in Pay Professional Leave without Pay

Time Period: Fall

Spring 2023

Academic Year

Other

Your report will be sent to your Dean for your PAF and to the Library Archives.

Report on sabbatical research leave in Spring 2023

Tinneke Van Camp, Associate Professor, Department of Criminology

1. Accomplishments in relation to the proposed goals

The issue of wrongful convictions and what causes it has gained much needed international attention and is widely being examined. Meanwhile, the literature on the consequences and support needs among those affected is far less developed. The objective of my sabbatical research project was, therefore, to apply insights from victimology and restorative justice, two fields I have been focusing my research and teaching on, to advance the understanding of needs for support among people affected by wrongful criminal convictions (more specifically, the wrongfully convicted person and their family, as well as the victims of the crime in which a wrongful conviction occurred), and to map out the services that exist and are still needed to respond to those needs in countries with an adversarial criminal justice system or adopting plea bargaining mechanisms of an adversarial criminal justice system.

In compliance with the sabbatical proposal, the following research and networking activities were completed:

- Inductive content analysis of publicly available narratives on the aftermath of wrongful convictions:
 - Content analyzed consisted of written and audio-visual documents in which individuals directly affected by a wrongful conviction (*i.e.*, the exoneree, the exoneree's family members, the victim of the crime or individuals bereaved by crime in which a wrongful conviction occurred) are given a voice and their reflections are expressed in their own words (*e.g.*, interviewed for the TV documentary (*e.g.*, *Trial 4, Amanda Knox, The Innocence Files, After Innocence*), or (co)wrote an autobiography (*e.g.*, *Picking Cotton*)). Some of these sources concern multiple cases, some focus on one particular case.
 - This content was inductively coded on specific topics in response to my research question, including needs and justice interests expressed by the individuals affected by a wrongful conviction, as well as their needs for support, suggestions for services needed and criticism on what is missing, what helped them in the post-conviction process, as well as needs for reparation and healing and indicators related to achieving justice.

- Meetings with scholars and practitioners in the field, and with undergraduate and graduate students involved in post-conviction review projects and courses, in countries with an adversarial criminal justice system or adopting plea bargaining mechanisms of an adversarial criminal justice system:
 - Meetings with scholars and students affiliated with *Not Guilty*, post-conviction review project at the School of Psychology, University of Sydney, Australia (March 2023);
 - Meetings with faculty with an interest and expertise in wrongful convictions at the *Griffith Criminology Institute*, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia (March 2023);
 - Meetings with scholars and students affiliated with the *Criminal Justice Review Project*, post-conviction review project at the School of Arts and Humanities at Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia (April 2023);
 - Meetings with faculty with an interest and expertise in wrongful convictions affiliated with the *Asa Branca Research Group of Criminology*, Catholic University of Pernambuco and Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil (June 2023).
- Attended student presentations and gave multiple guest lectures (e.g., on preliminary findings of the inductive content analysis of publicly available narratives on the aftermath of wrongful convictions, as well as on the impact of victimization and the role of restorative justice in general) in the context of the victims' rights week organized by the *Asa Branca Research Group of Criminology* (Catholic University of Pernambuco and Federal University of Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil) (June 12-16, 2023).
- Submitted a book proposal for an edited collection on 'Support for People Affected by Wrongful Convictions' (working title; Van Camp, ed.):
 - Submitted to Routledge and reviewed by three anonymous peer-reviewers.
 - Includes abstracts from various experts and practitioners from different countries with an adversarial criminal justice system or adopting plea bargaining mechanisms of an adversarial criminal justice system (including the UK, USA, Australia, Brazil) and from diverse disciplines, as well as my own abstract of the preface, a chapter about who is affected and how by wrongful convictions and a concluding chapter.
 - The edited collection will provide a state of affairs regarding the extent of the issue of wrongful convictions, descriptions of the impact, support needs and services already offered in various countries, as well as reflections on a way forward. It will seek to raise awareness about the consequences of wrongful convictions and the concomitant need for stable and systematic support, which will ultimately offer additional fuel to continued efforts to improve the system to avoid such injustices in the first place.

- What I have learned during my sabbatical leave, through meetings and content analysis, has informed my CRIM178 Restorative Justice section and my CRIM 109 Comparative Systems of Criminal Justice sections in Fall 2023.

Drawing on the content analysis and networking with scholars during the sabbatical leave, the following deliverables in compliance with the sabbatical proposal are in progress:

- Preface and first chapter (on who is affected and how by wrongful convictions) for the edited book described above are being drafted;
- An abstract for a conference presentation on the inductive content analysis of narratives on the aftermath of wrongful convictions has been drafted, ready to be submitted in response to the upcoming call for presentation proposals for the *European Association of Psychology and Law* conference, July 2024 (instead of attending the upcoming Innocence Network annual conference as suggested in my sabbatical proposal (submitted in 2021), I will submit an abstract to present my findings at the European Association of Psychology and Law instead, to accommodate a meeting with some of my co-applicants of a future workshop meeting (see below), a collaboration that resulted from my sabbatical project);
- A journal article on the inductive content analysis of narratives on the aftermath of wrongful convictions is being drafted.

In addition to the activities included in the proposal for the sabbatical leave, the following was also accomplished:

In relation to the topic of the sabbatical leave (support needs following wrongful convictions):

- RSCA grant application, submitted and awarded;
- Book review for Cook, K.J. (2022). Shattered Justice. Crime Victims' Experiences with Wrongful Convictions and Exonerations. Accepted for publication in *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*;
- Co-wrote an application for an international workshop meeting on 'Life after exoneration in Europe: Is the worst yet to come?', in collaboration with researchers from the University of Sydney (Australia), Universiteit Leiden (the Netherlands), and the University of the Basque Country (Spain), and ready to be submitted at, for instance, the *Oñati International Institute for the Sociology of Law*, Spain (due in February 2024).

In relation to other research topics and scholarly activities, for instance:

- Finalized a book chapter on ‘Reflections on qualitative interviews with people who experienced adversity and harm’, a contribution for The Handbook on Research Methods and Restorative Justice (an edited collection to be published by Eleven), which has been submitted and reviewed by the editors;
- Guest lecture in the Law School at the University of Western Australia, Perth (April 4, 2023);
- Worked on a co-authored book on gendered violence and restorative justice (to be published by Routledge) and had a writing workshop with my co-authors, including a conference and roundtable meetings with practitioners and scholars in the context of the Canadian Victims’ Rights Week at the Université de Montréal, Canada (May 14-18, 2023).

2. Approvals of modifications, if any, to original proposal

(Not applicable)

3. Objectives of original proposal, if any, that were not accomplished

(Not applicable)

4. Anticipated outcomes for the near future

- A book contract with Routledge for ‘Support for People Affected by Wrongful Convictions’ (working title; Van Camp, ed.), including a preface, one chapter and concluding remarks that will be written by me.
- Summer – Fall 2024: a journal article submitted and conference presentation completed on the findings of the content analysis on narratives of people affected by wrongful convictions.
- International workshop meeting on ‘Life after exoneration in Europe’ if the application described above is successful.
- As explained in the sabbatical proposal, the above could eventually also inform work on a grant proposal for a *Center For Support After Exoneration*, in collaboration with faculty in the Department of Criminology and, potentially, the Craig School of Business (who could help

securing work contracts and provide financial planning for exonerees), the Department of Social Work Education (who could help with much needed counseling needs and navigating administrative procedures for both exonerees and victims in wrongful conviction cases), the Kremen School of Education and Human Development (who could help devise educational support), the Media, Communications and Journalism Department (who may play a role in raising awareness for the issue in the general public), and Peace and Conflict Studies at the Philosophy Department (who may want to assist in facilitating communication between exonerees and victims of crime).

Support for People Affected by Wrongful Convictions
Tinneke Van Camp, Associate Professor, Department of Criminology
Proposal for sabbatical leave (Spring 2023)

Abstract

The issue of wrongful convictions, and especially what causes it, has gained much needed international attention and is widely being examined. Meanwhile, criminological attention to the root causes and systematic errors that sustain wrongful convictions has been rather limited (Leo, 2017) – this includes lessons that can be learned from victimological research and studies on the benefits of restorative justice practices to alleviate the plight of those affected by wrongful convictions. The objective of this sabbatical project is to apply insight from victimology and restorative justice, two fields I have been focusing my research and teaching on, to advance the understanding of needs for support among people affected by wrongful criminal convictions (more specifically, the wrongfully convicted person and their family, as well as the victims of the crime in which a wrongful conviction occurred) following exoneration, and to map out the services that exist and are still needed to respond to those needs. This will involve inductive content analysis of autobiographies, podcasts and TV documentaries, as well as conversations with the few existing services in the USA, UK and Australia (and, if possible, in other adversarial criminal justice countries) that provide support following exoneration, a number of which include practices inspired by restorative justice theory and practice. This will result in a journal article, a book proposal for an edited collection (including a list of contributors made up of various experts and practitioners, and two chapters written by me), conference presentation(s) and guest lecture(s), and, eventually, a grant proposal for a support center.

Background

The criminal justice system is theoretically designed to protect individuals from arbitrary and unfair treatment and adjudication. Yet, a non-negligible number of people, in the USA and elsewhere, are done a gross injustice by being convicted for a crime they did not commit, which results in unjustly receiving a criminal record that may inhibit their employment opportunities and social life, as well as being punished for it by receiving a fine or community service, probationary measures, time in prison, or, in a worst-case scenario, the death penalty. People who are wrongfully convicted have to live with the requirements and restrictions of their sentence and criminal record. Once exonerated, the trauma incurred and the stigma that is attached to a conviction, even if it was overturned, continues to affect their lives (Goldberg *et al.*, 2020).

According to the National Registry of Exonerations (NRE), that collects information on exonerations in the USA since 1989, on August 24, 2021, a total of 2,849 individuals have been exonerated in the USA, 242 of which were wrongfully convicted for crimes recorded in California.

Data from the NRE further reveals that African Americans are significantly overrepresented in the group of exonerees in the USA (Gross, Possley and Stephens, 2017), and they also tend to have received longer prison sentences for a crime they did not commit than white exonerees (NRE, 2021). Of the 2,849 exonerees reported in the NRE on August 24, 2021, 126 did not receive any sentence (but the limitations that come with having a criminal record should not be ignored), 135 got probation, 7 received community service and 4 a fine. Two had been committed to a mental hospital. Most exonerees had been incarcerated: 447 were sentenced to life in prison, 212 to life without the possibility of parole, and 132 had received the death penalty for a crime they did not commit. Many were only freed after having served multiple years in prison, on average about 9 years (NRE, 2021). As of June 2021, exonerated individuals had collectively served 25,000 years in prison (NRE, 2021).

Exoneration requires that someone '*who was convicted of a crime was later relieved of all legal consequences of that conviction through a decision by a prosecutor, a governor or a court, after new evidence of his or her innocence was discovered* (Gross and Shaffer, 2012, p.7)'. The requirement of new evidence implies that the wrongfully convicted person has the means and support to collect such evidence. It is often difficult, costly and time-consuming to have a wrongful conviction reversed. Legal clinics providing pro-bono legal assistance towards exoneration might work primarily with people who are serving long-term prison sentences or who are on death row, in part because of the particularly devastating and potentially irreversible impact of undergoing such as sentence when factually innocent - cases that are punishable with these kinds of sentences are overrepresented in the number of exonerations. In general, these cases also receive more resources for evidence collection leading up to, and following, conviction (Gross *et al.*, 2005; Steiker and Steiker, 2005; NRE, 2021). Not surprisingly then, it is estimated that only a fraction of wrongfully convicted individuals manage to obtain exoneration (Acker, 2017), and any official records of exonerations, including the one provided by the NRE, will forcibly and enormously underestimate the number of wrongful convictions. Gross (2013) approximates, based on the data available, that one to five per cent of the total amount of convictions in the USA are erroneous.

The extent and impact of wrongful convictions have been gaining public awareness, prompted, for instance, by various popular podcasts and TV documentaries and series, such as 'Serial', 'Making A Murderer', and 'When They See Us'. Since the 1990s multiple initiatives have emerged across the nation to address these miscarriages of justice. In the USA, many of them are affiliated with the Innocence Network, an umbrella organization established in 2004 and growing since. Today it counts 56 national member organizations and 12 international member organizations (including in the UK, Italy, and Australia). Most of these organizations provide much needed legal and investigative services to those fighting their wrongful conviction. Far fewer member organizations focus specifically on support for innocent individuals after regaining freedom or having their conviction overturned. Only two of the Innocence Network member organizations in the USA are designated Exoneree Support Organizations, namely After Innocence and Witness to Innocence. After Innocence offers reentry support nationwide, which is mostly focused on support in obtaining health and public benefits, as well as connecting people to local social services. Witness to Innocence was specifically created for people exonerated from death row and aims to empower them and amplify their voices against the death penalty. These two nationwide organizations respond to various needs that follow exoneration, which the legal and investigative member organizations cannot (sufficiently) address (many offer some support, but their resources are limited and need to be used towards getting wrongful convictions overturned).

There are a number of local charity organizations providing support following exoneration across the nation as well, but more such services, on a state level and services offering emotional and healing support as well as practical support (finding housing, employment, *etc*), could be beneficial for this population. Victimological insight and findings from research into the potential of restorative practices for victims of crime can offer important contributions to advance services in this regard.

Victimology advances our understanding of consequences of victimization and of what people harmed by such adversity need in terms of support. While victimological research mainly focuses on consequences of interpersonal crime, such as property crime, assaults, hate crime, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, or murder and manslaughter, it should also pay attention to harm done through wrongful convictions, which is an injustice caused by the State (Naughton, 2016). Wrongful convictions could be labelled as a form of iatrogenic harm (meaning '*injury, hurt or damage generated by an institutional practice that is justified on the basis of helping, assisting or healing individuals with problems requiring remedies* (Scott, 2016, p.107)'; Scott (2016) refers to disproportionate police stop-and-searches and overreliance on incarceration in response to crime as causing iatrogenic injustice and hurt, but the concept could also apply to wrongful convictions resulting from a need to indicate a guilty party, to achieve a sense of community safety and clearance rates, for instance). Extant literature on wrongful convictions explores the notion of victimization to an extent, but mostly does so in an anecdotal, rather than a systematic, fashion (*e.g.*, Naughton, 2013). Notable exceptions are Westervelt and Cook (2013) and Goldberg *et al.* (2020), who describe their research findings on the financial, employment, emotional, mental health, and social challenges following exoneration, requiring multiple resources, reintegration support, and wider system reform.

It is indeed not hard to imagine the devastating consequences of a wrongful conviction for the innocent person and their family. While fighting their conviction, there is uncertainty, deprivation of liberty and inability to provide for their family, to name but a few. These have been found to cause anxiety, depression and PTSD (Wildeman, Costelloe and Schehr, 2011) - such emotional reactions are also common among victims of crime. After regaining their freedom, exonerees may face financial and housing issues, need an education or vocational training, and require psychological support. Unfortunately, there are far more re-entry services for rightfully convicted offenders on parole or probation than for exonerees (Norris, 2012; Naughton, 2013). Overall, after exoneration, the social stigma of a conviction, even if this conviction was proven to be erroneous, may be difficult to discard (Goldberg *et al.*, 2020) – likewise, victims may experience blaming and shaming when they report a crime, and may face incomprehension and social stigmatization (Davies, 2016; Walklate, 2016). Most exonerees do not receive compensation for the time they lost and the injustice they experienced (NRE, 2021). In the USA, compensation statutes are patchy (Norris, 2012), and not every exoneree is eligible for compensation (Wildeman, Costelloe and Schehr, 2017) – while every state in the USA has a victim compensation program, not every victim is eligible (Takahashi and James, 2019). Compensation also does not necessarily heal the emotional damage that was done or satisfy a need for justice (Goldberg *et al.*, 2020).

In cases where an actual crime took place (wrongful convictions also happen in no-crime cases), a wrongful conviction can also mean that the actual perpetrator of the crime has not been identified. This might have serious consequences for the safety of the community and the perception of legitimacy of the criminal justice system. On top of that, the person harmed by the crime, for which the exoneree was wrongfully convicted, has to come to terms with the idea that the actual perpetrator is potentially still at large and may never be found, and that an innocent

person has been punished (Thompson-Cannino and Cotton, 2009; Williamson et al., 2016). In short, through wrongful convictions the criminal justice system not only fails the innocent person, but also the person harmed by the actual perpetrator.

It is in these kinds of situations that restorative justice practices can play a valuable role. Restorative justice gives center-stage to people affected by an injustice, and facilitates a dialogue between the person harmed and the person responsible for that harm, in order to facilitate healing and restoration for all involved (e.g., Zehr, 1990). With their focus on the needs of those affected by harm, leaving room for them to define and describe the harm and how this can be restored, as well as on dialogue with those responsible for the injustice, in a prepared and facilitated forum, restorative practices have been found to be helpful, and even therapeutic, in the wake of violent crime (Strang, 2002). Several scholars in the wrongful convictions field have suggested the potential of restorative justice in the aftermath of exonerations, in order to extend a sense of justice beyond exoneration and to facilitate healing for all the parties affected (e.g., Bazelon, 2018; Burnett, 2005). A restorative approach, following exoneration, can provide a space for a shared narrative, accountability, and increased trust (Doyle, 2020) as well as mutual understanding (Jenkins, 2014). The exoneree may want to hold the system accountable (beyond receiving compensation), both the exoneree and the victim of a crime in which a wrongful conviction took place may have many unanswered questions about how this could have happened and may want to get assurances that strategies and reforms to prevent this from happening to others are put in place. The exoneree may want to speak with the victim of the crime they were wrongfully convicted for to know that this individual understands that they are innocent (the victim of the crime may struggle with the idea that the wrong person was convicted), and vice versa, the victim of the crime that resulted in a wrongful conviction may want to know how the exoneree is doing, etc. Jennifer Thompson-Cannino, for instance, who was the victim of a brutal rape, for which Ronald Cotton was wrongfully convicted and served many years in prison, founded the Healing Justice Center, which makes use of restorative circles to deal with the hurt experienced in wrongful conviction cases.

Objectives

In light of the above, the purpose of the sabbatical project is to draw on insights from the field of victimology and restorative justice to advance understanding of the consequences of wrongful convictions. More particularly, the objective is to advance the understanding of needs for support among people affected by wrongful criminal convictions (*i.e.*, the wrongfully convicted person and their family, and the victims of the crime (including people bereaved by crime) in which a wrongful conviction occurred) following exoneration, and to map out the services that exist and are still needed to respond to those needs. Additionally, it aims to build a network of contacts with people involved in organizations focusing on exonerations and support for exonerees and others impacted by wrongful convictions. Ultimately, this could lead to the creation of a Center For Support After Exoneration at Fresno State, which would provide support for people affected by a wrongful conviction, which may include restorative practices involving exonerees and their loved-ones, the victims of the crime and those bereaved by it, and those they hold responsible for the miscarriage of justice. Such a Center could assist and unburden the legal services working towards exoneration.

Personally, the proposed leave will allow me to use my expertise in victimology and restorative justice to enhance my understanding of consequences of wrongful convictions as well as my insight into the use and potential of restorative practices. It will also enable me to practice a research method I have thus far not used (although it will be building on my experience with qualitative data analysis of in-depth interviews and focus group interviews).

Method

The objective to gain in-depth insight into justice needs and service needs among people affected by wrongful convictions, a topic that has not been sufficiently studied, requires a qualitative research approach. The data collection and analysis also need to be completed in the time frame of a four-month leave. The research part of this proposal will, therefore, involve inductive media content analysis. While media content analysis is not frequently used in criminological research, it will be very valuable for the purposes of this project. There is already a massive amount of data in the public domain on wrongful convictions, including interviews with and oral and written narratives by individuals who were directly affected by a wrongful conviction. For the sake of the feasibility of this study within one semester, rather than conducting my own interviews, I will conduct inductive content analysis on existing autobiographies (e.g. What Set Me Free (by Brian Banks); Getting Life – An Innocent Man’s 25-year Journey from Prison to Peace; Just Mercy; Picking Cotton), TV documentaries (e.g. Time Simply Passes; The Central Park Five; Amanda Knox) and podcasts on wrongful convictions (e.g. Flawed Justice: The Kimberly Long Story (7 episodes); Undisclosed (> 30 episodes available); Mass Exoneration (5 episodes available); Wrongful Convictions podcast (>30 episodes available); some of these podcasts concern multiple cases, some focus on one particular case). The sample will consist of written, audio and audio-visual documents in which individuals directly affected by a wrongful conviction (*i.e.*, the exoneree, the exoneree’s family members, the victim of the crime (including individuals bereaved by crime) in which a wrongful conviction occurred) are given a voice and their reflections are expressed in their own words (meaning that they were interviewed, they made the podcast or documentary, or they (co)wrote the autobiography). Analysis will continue until empirical and theoretical saturation is reached. These documents will be inductively coded on specific topics in response to my research question, including needs and justice interest expressed by the individuals affected by a wrongful conviction, as well as their needs for support, suggestions for services needed and criticism on what is missing, needs for reparation and healing, and other indicators related to restorative justice.

The findings from this content analysis will enable me to produce a journal article, a book chapter, conference presentation(s) and guest lecture(s). In addition, the findings will inform conversations with providers in the field of wrongful convictions, to discuss the advancement of support services and, eventually, a grant proposal for a Center For Support After Exoneration at Fresno State. In preparation for this sabbatical project, I have already started having conversations with scholars and practitioners connected with the Innocence Network and Innocence Project as well as in the field of restorative practices that could be useful in this context (e.g., Circles of Support). They have indicated that they are interested in a continuing this conversation, given the needs they have observed among the exonerees they have been working with.

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The content analysis that will be conducted in the context of this project does not require travel abroad, yet, if possible, I will travel to visit Innocence Network members in the USA and abroad. During those travels, I can continue to conduct the content analysis, which does not require specific equipment other than a computer (the documents that will be analyzed are available in the public domain and perfectly transportable).

The Innocence Network holds its annual conference in the spring, which would be a perfect platform to present my findings, justifying the proposal to take a leave in the spring semester. Subsequently, the study will then also perfectly feed into my CRIM178 Restorative Justice section, only offered in the fall semester. Furthermore, in order to keep the momentum going and not to lose the contacts I have so far been able to establish and will maintain in the coming year, a sabbatical leave in Spring 2023 is opportune.

Activity	Jan 2023	Feb 2023	March 2023	April 2023
Inductive content analysis of autobiographies, TV documentaries and podcasts				
Contacting scholars and practitioners in the field for meetings				
Meetings with scholars and practitioners in the field				
Write book proposal (including assembly of list of contributors based on meetings in the field)				
Write introductory chapter for edited book				
Write journal article				
Write book chapter on findings of content analysis for edited collection				
Conference presentation(s) and guest lecture(s)				
Start writing grant proposal for Center For Support After Exoneration				

Deliverables and impact

I will produce a journal article (to be submitted to, for instance, the International Journal of Restorative Justice), a book proposal for an edited collection (including a list of contributors made up of various experts, practitioners and two of my own chapters), conference presentation(s) (e.g., at the annual Innocence Network conference in Spring 2023) and guest lecture(s), and, I will eventually work on a grant proposal for a support center.

The journal article, presentation(s) and one of the two chapters in the edited collection will draw on the findings from the content analysis of autobiographies, TV documentaries and podcasts on wrongful convictions. The other book chapter will be an introductory chapter to the edited collection, to be submitted with the book proposal. The many conversations I intend to have with people in the field in the USA, but also in the UK and Australia, will enable the creation of an international network of contacts that could benefit colleagues in the Department of Criminology and our students (through guest lectures, and potentially internship placements). The project will allow enhancing my understanding of consequences of wrongful convictions as well as insight into the potential benefits and applications of restorative practices. I will also advance my research skills through the use of a research method I have not used before, for which I can build on my experience in doing qualitative research in sensitive topics surrounding crime victimization and restorative justice.

Based on the conversations with practitioners in the field of wrongful convictions, in the USA and in other adversarial criminal justice countries, which will be informed by findings from the content analysis, a grant proposal for a Center For Support After Exoneration will eventually be drafted as well. At Fresno State, we have a perfect opportunity and expertise to establish a Center For Support After Exoneration. The expertise in victimology, victim services and restorative justice, as well as in the causes of wrongful convictions (more particularly on the impact of memory accuracy and suggestibility in eye witness interviews through research by Dr. Kieckhafer) at the Department of Criminology allows us to contribute in a unique way to the overall mission of the Innocence Network. Additionally, the Criminology Department has experience in implementing and supporting re-entry projects and services for convicted offenders, for instance through the work of Dr. Hughes with Project Rebound. Although these initiatives are not particularly focused on wrongfully convicted individuals, the experience with managing re-entry programs and projects is useful for the creation of a support center. Furthermore, such a new center would allow for and requires advanced interdisciplinary collaboration across our university. For instance, the Craig School of Business could potentially help secure work contracts and provide financial planning for exonerees; the Department of Social Work Education could help with much needed counseling needs and navigating administrative procedures for both exonerees and victims in wrongful conviction cases; the Kremen School of Education and Human Development could help devise educational support; the Media, Communications and Journalism Department may play a role in raising awareness for the issue in the general public; the Peace and Conflict Studies at the Philosophy Department may want to assist in facilitating communication between exonerees and victims of crime. There is also plenty of potential for student involvement, in the form of service learning and undergraduate internships - support for exonerees and victims of crime often requires tailored, hands-on assistance – as well as graduate research projects.

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