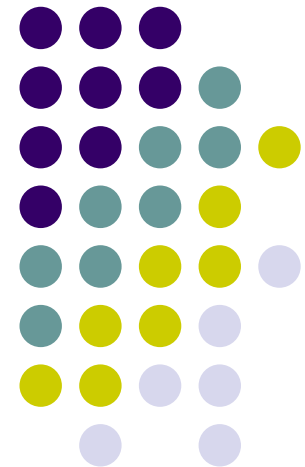


# An Overview of Objective Custody Classification Systems and Procedures for Research Validation

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# Classification Systems in Prisons

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- Various forms of prison classification systems have a long history, for various purposes, including security/custody, program needs and public risk after release (or recidivism)
- Our purpose is for custody to maximize the safety of inmates and staff
- In recent years objective (or scored) custody classification systems have replaced subjective or clinical based assessment practices in most western jurisdictions. Australia is 'behind' the game on this score
- Why the push toward objective methods?
  - False Positive Errors – Over-classification
  - False Negative Errors – Under-classification
  - Litigation
  - Over-crowding
  - Growing Costs for the Industrial Correctional Complex
  - Politics and Increased Public Safety Concerns

# What is an Objective Custody/Security Classification System?

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- The Broad Range and Purposes of Classification Systems in Correctional Facilities – Custody versus Public Risk
- Prison Management Classification Models act as the “Brain” for Corrections –
  - Actuarial and Consensus based Factors for Custody/Security Purposes. Objective research data and experiential input is crucial to save money and lives. Prison systems really cannot afford to not implement a normed and validated system for their particular jurisdiction
- Custody and Security Concerns should not be confused with External and Internal Prison Classification Systems
- External Classification centers on Custody Assessment, Program Needs Assessment of Inmates and Facility Designation
- Internal Classification centers on Housing Assignment, Program Assignment, Work Assignment, Facility Assignment and Eligibility for Community Programs
- Inappropriate Uses – The Case of LSI-R and COMPAS (public risk and case management models for rehabilitation not custody in prisons)

# The Basic Elements of the ICJC/RARA Classification Model



- **Static and Dynamic Factors on Initial and Reclassification Forms, Scored and Weighted for each Jurisdiction. Adaptations from Systems Developed in the US and Elsewhere over 20 Years**
- **Some Initial Classification Factors:**
  - Priority Items*
    - Severity of Current Offence (scored by Offence Severity Scale)
    - Severity of Prior Most Severe Criminal Conviction (scored by OSS)
    - Escape History
    - History of Institutional Violence
  - Additional Items*
    - Number of Prior Major Offence Convictions
    - Drug/Alcohol History
    - Age (discounts are scored)
  - Stability Factors (discounts are scored)
    - educational status/educational achievement
    - employment status
    - permanency of residence
  - Some Reclassification Factors:
    - Priority Items Retained*
    - Additional Items (discounts scored)*
      - Work/Program/Education Performance
      - Number of Disciplinary Matters on Current Sentence
      - Most Severe Disciplinary Matter since Last Classification (scored by scale)
      - Current Age
- **Scoring Scales and a Coding Manual**
- **Staff Training, Commitment and Ownership**

# A Sketch of Research Validations Procedures for Forecast Modeling

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- Initial Review and Negotiated Agreements for Prototype Instruments
- Preliminary Reliability Testing of Current Inmates from IT Files
- Revision of Prototype Instruments for Major Pilot Test
- Pilot Testing of Remand, Initial and Reclassification Samples
- Merging of Disciplinary data with Classification data
- Data Analysis and Instrument Revisions
- Staff Training for Implementation
- Forecasting and Monitoring



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