2015 CSWE STANDARDS

INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE TO COMPETENCY BEHAVIORS

WITHIN THE TEXT AND RELATED CLASS EXERCISES

## Chapter 4. Environmental Sustainability and the Social Work Profession

*Competency 3a, in its focus on environmental justice relates to most if not all the sections in this chapter, either explicitly or implicitly. Competency 6a, because of its focus on person-in-environment also relates to the major part of this chapter.*

*Competency 3a:* Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.

*Competency 6a*: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.

A Brief Eco History

The Planet in Crisis: The Scope of Environmental Loss and Damage

*Competency 8b*: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

*Competency 9a*: Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes.

*Competency 9b*: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcomes.

*Competency 9c*: Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes.

The Unintended Consequence of “Growth”

War and Environmental Accidents

Climate Change

Food, Water, and Population Growth

Managing Our Waters

Overpopulation and Scarcity

The Importance of Empowering Women

*Competency 3a*: Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.

*Competency 6b:* Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

*Competency 8b*: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

Modern Agriculture and the Loss of Biodiversity

The Importance of Biodiversity

Contemporary Farming

The Corporate Role in Farm Production

The Promise of Social Work

Expanding Environmental Awareness

*Competency 3a*: Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels.

*Competency 3b*: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

*Competency 4a*: Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research.

*Competency 8b*: Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.

*Competency 9d*: Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

Acknowledging a Spiritual Dimension

**Thinking Su**st**ainably**

Valuing Cultural Diversity

*Competency 2a*: Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

*Competency 6b*: Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Social Welfare Policy Considerations

*Competency 3b*: Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice.

Seeking Solutions

Green Jobs

Natural Systems Farming

Mass Transportation

Summary and Conclusion

Critical Thinking Questions

*Competency 2b*: Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations.

*Competency 5b*: Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services.

**Group Exercises**

*Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice*

1. Environmental advocacy. Have students investigate how their university is handling issues related to environmental policies including waste management, conservation, food quality, building issues. For guidance, check out Sustainability at the University of California, Berkeley:

http://sustainability.berkeley.edu

2. Environmental justice. Have the class check out the environmental justice scorecard by the zip code for their community at: http://scorecard.goodguide.com/community/ej-index.tcl. One can see the level of exposure of members of the community by income levels and race to pollution and other toxic materials. The educator can put this on the screen and type in area codes for parts of the country known to have serious health disparities for comparison to the local community.

3. Environmental justice. Using the EPA mapper tool at <http://epamap14.epa.gov/ejmap/entry.html> , the instructor can show the class where to type in the local community area to search for indicators of neighborhoods in the U.S. that hold health dangers to residents. Relate to race and class. The results can be eye opening for students.

4. Written assignment. Have students go to the Worldwatch Institute: Vision for a Sustainable World and select and summarize three articles of interest and relevance to the topic of environmental justice.

*Competency 5: Engage in Policy Practice.*

1. Research mass transportation initiatives in cities (for example, Portland, Oregon) and countries (the UK, France) and compare with what other cities have or do not have. Have the class draw up plans for family friendly forms of transportation and consider how that would make changes in social life and improve air quality. Have students consider areas of resistance to their proposals. A letter-writing campaign to legislators might be undertaken if the students become enthusiastic over the possibilities.

2. Individual assessment related to consumerism: One of the most effective techniques is to ask students to reflect on the meaning of individual ownership of material goods versus collective responsibility for the natural world. This exercise begins by asking students to make an exhaustive list of everything they own. In a culture obsessed with consumption and accumulation of personal wealth it is especially difficult for people to reflect on their possessions because possessions make up such a taken for granted, normal and expected part of our lives. And, this is the point of the exercise. As students begin to organize their lists they are compelled to focus upon how their individual, emotional and cultural identities and activities are reflected in the possessions they own.

*Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice*

Grow a community garden. Many university social work departments are cultivating gardens in urban environments in low income neighborhoods. For example, see information from New Mexico State University, Monmouth University, and Western Kentucky University which has established an organic gardening collective.

**Videos and DVDs:**

*Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice*

Economic justice. Show students *The Corporation* (available at [www.thecorporation.com](http://www.thecorporation.com)) which satirically diagnoses the corporation based on *DSM* criteria. Other provocative films on issues related to globalization are *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch’s War on Journalism* (at www.outfoxed.org) and *Wal-Mart: The High Price of Low Price* (available for $12.95 at [www.walmartmovie.com](http://www.walmartmovie.com).) Students often have strong reactions to these films which opens up the possibility of thoughtful class discussions.