

EECO's Environmental Education Certification Standards

Theme 1: Environmental Literacy

1.1 Questioning and Analysis Skills

A certified environmental educator will compare and contrast three different investigative approaches/methods/modes and apply at least one of them to an environmental topic.

A certified environmental educator will describe two scenarios in which environmental knowledge is incomplete, and will explain how environmental knowledge continues to change as discoveries are made.

1.2 Knowledge of Environmental Processes and Systems

A certified environmental educator will demonstrate an understanding of the processes and systems that comprise each of these concepts:

- § biological change;
- § cycles, physical processes that shape the earth, and energy flow;
- § biodiversity;
- § cultural, political and economic systems;
- § human interactions with the environment; and
- § ecological consequences.

A certified environmental educator will demonstrate knowledge of the certifying state and bioregion's natural and cultural histories.

1.3 Personal and Civic Responsibility

A certified environmental educator will

- § describe an Ohio environmental issue and various societal values that play a role in it;
- § articulate citizen rights and responsibilities, as well as his/her position, with respect to that issue;
- § propose and justify a course of action;

Theme 2. Foundations of Environmental Education

2.1 Fundamental characteristics & goals of environmental education

A certified environmental educator will be able to describe the goals, objectives and characteristics of environmental education that contribute to making it a distinct field.

2.2 How environmental education is implemented

A certified environmental educator will be able to identify two major national and two state EE providers and the resources they offer.

Theme 3: Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator

3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice

A certified environmental educator will correlate two inquiry-based lessons to national and/or state academic standards.

3.2 Emphasis on education, not advocacy

A certified environmental educator will illustrate with two examples what the differences are between advocacy and education.

A certified environmental educator will identify two instructional strategies and two curriculum materials/resources (e.g. CD-ROMs, videos, posters, books, websites, etc.) and explain how they can be used to encourage learners to gain/explore different perspectives, form their own opinions, and support their beliefs.

3.3 Ongoing learning and professional development

A certified environmental educator will identify his or her own past and present professional development activities, conduct a self-assessment of the degree to which he or she currently meets the core competencies, and create a plan for his or her future professional development, identifying

§ specific gap(s) in his or her knowledge and skills and

§ three different methods to achieve improvement (e.g. membership in professional associations, professional journals, mentoring, conferences, field experiences, etc.).

Theme 4: Planning and Implementing EE

4.1 Knowledge of learners

A certified environmental educator will demonstrate and/or document appropriate instructional approaches that meet the needs of diverse learners, taking into account differences in:

§ Cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds,

§ Age and grade level,

§ Levels of knowledge and experience,

§ Special needs, and

§ Developmental abilities.

4.2 Knowledge of instructional methodologies

A certified environmental educator will demonstrate three distinct instructional methods that are particularly suited to environmental education.

4.3 Knowledge of environmental education materials and resources

A certified environmental educator will be able to list and critically evaluate two types of EE materials obtainable from community and corporate organizations, agencies, professional development training programs, and/or the Internet. (Note: Evaluations should be based on *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence*.)

A certified environmental educator will be able to critically evaluate one state or local EE program. (Note: Evaluations should be based on *Nonformal Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence*.)

4.4 Settings for instruction

A certified environmental educator will analyze one of his or her teaching environments citing three ways to address potential safety issues and three ways in which the teaching environment is appropriate for the subject matter he or she is teaching.

A certified environmental educator will describe three field experiences in which he or she has been able to link content to the learners' immediate environment.

4.5 Curriculum planning

A certified environmental educator will give two examples of how he or she has successfully integrated environmental education into curricula, programs or an organization's mission.

A certified environmental educator from the nonformal community will be able to demonstrate strategies for supporting and enhancing teachers' efforts in environmental education at the P-12 level.

Theme 5. Fostering Learning

5.1 An inclusive and collaborative learning environment

A certified environmental educator will engage children/adults in their own learning and provided first-hand, inquiry-based, developmentally appropriate experiences, indicating ways in which they collaborated.

A certified environmental educator will develop a lesson/presentation that is relevant and interdisciplinary.

A certified environmental educator will cite two instances where he or she used the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of learners as an instructional resource.

5.2 Flexible and responsive instruction

A certified environmental educator will take advantage of “teachable moments” by being flexible and open to student questions and ideas.

Theme 6: Assessment and Evaluation

6.1 Assessment that is part of instruction

A certified environmental educator will demonstrate how one assessment strategy was used to shape instructional planning and/or delivery.

6.2 Evaluating Programs

A certified environmental educator will describe:

A certified environmental educator will display three data collection tools and the analysis he or she used to evaluate an EE program.

**These competencies are taken from the North American Association for Environmental Education’s (NAAEE) competencies. They also use and provide excellent materials called the “Guidelines for Excellence.” To access these guidelines follow this link to NAAEE’s website: <http://eelinked.naaee.net/n/guidelines>.