Human Values and Social Contexts: Population and Environment

Preamble

Courses included in the Population and Environment sub-category help students to understand how humankind interacts with our finite physical and biological environment. This understanding can be fostered in different ways. Some courses may emphasize technical, scientific problems and solutions. Others may focus on institutional, historical, and political dimensions, and others may focus on the cultural, ethical, and philosophical issues underlying current environmental problems. Courses fulfilling this requirement should address at least one of the following: a) the role of both local and global environmental change on the quality of human life; b) the pervasive role of human population growth on environmental quality and the quality of life, both in industrial and developing countries; c) the influence of historical, cultural, religious, economic, educational, and political factors on population growth and environmental quality; d) the ethical and philosophical assumptions underlying environmental policies and thinking about nature and the place of humans in nature; e) possible sustainable solutions to the population/environment problems.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing the general education area of Population and Environment will be able to do at least one of the following:

1.) Recognize and understand the role of both local and global environmental changeon the quality of human life,

2.) Describe the influence of diverse factors, such as philosophical, cultural, religious,economic, educational, and political, on population growth and environmental quality,

3.) Understand the concepts and principles necessary to evaluate contemporary issuesof population growth, natural resource conservation, and environmental protection,

4.) Interpret diverse types of information about environmental issues, to develop theirown perspectives on these issues, and to communicate these perspectives effectively,

5.) Understand and describe technical and/or scientific approaches for addressingproblems that arise in the relationship between human population and the environment.

Description	Capstone	Level 3	Level 2	Benchmark
Understanding Global Systems	Uses deep knowledge of the historic and contemporary role and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems to develop and advocate for informed, appropriate action to solve complex problems in the human and natural worlds.	Analyzes major elements of global systems, including their historic and contemporary interconnections and the differential effects of human organizations and actions, to pose elementary solutions to complex problems in the human and natural worlds.	Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interconnections, and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and the natural worlds.	Identifies the basic role of some global and local institutions, ideas, and processes in the human and natural worlds.
Evidence Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation.
Evaluate Potential Solutions	Evaluation of solutions is deep and elegant (for example, contains thorough and insightful explanation) and includes, deeply and thoroughly, all of the following: considers history of problem, reviews logic/reasoning, examines feasibility of solution, and weighs impacts of solution.	Evaluation of solutions is adequate (for example, contains thorough explanation) and includes the following: considers history of problem, reviews logic/reasoning, examines feasibility of solution, and weighs impacts of solution.	Evaluation of solutions is brief (for example, explanation lacks depth) and includes the following: considers history of problem, reviews logic/reasoning, examines feasibility of solution, and weighs impacts of solution.	Evaluation of solutions is superficial (for example, contains cursory, surface level explanation) and includes the following: considers history of problem, reviews logic/reasoning, examines feasibility of solution, and weighs impacts of solution.
Perspective Taking	Evaluates and applies diverse perspectives to complex subjects within natural and human systems in the face of multiple and even conflicting positions (i.e. cultural, disciplinary, and ethical.)	Synthesizes other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies and explains multiple perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when exploring subjects within natural and human systems.	Identifies multiple perspectives while maintaining a value preference for own positioning (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical).
Personal and Social Responsibility	Takes informed and responsible action to address ethical, social, and environmental challenges in global systems and evaluates the local and broader consequences of individual and collective interventions.	Analyzes the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of global systems and identifies a range of actions informed by one's sense of personal and civic responsibility.	Explains the ethical, social, and environmental consequences of local and national decisions on global systems.	Identifies basic ethical dimensions of some local or national decisions that have global impact.