Accreditation
Distinguished College and University Programs

Introduction and Application Process

Accreditation

Distinguished College and University Programs

Emerging opportunities for policymakers, funders, systems leadership and providers

Preface

Preparing environmental education practitioners who possess the knowledge and abilities to provide high quality education to diverse audiences in a wide variety of settings is of utmost importance to our growing profession. Environmental educators teach in public and private classrooms, and in nonformal education institutions such as nature centers, zoos, museums, and parks. They organize environmental education programs in their communities, and work with all ages from preschoolers to seniors. They teach at universities in education, environmental studies, geography, natural resource, and science programs. They develop curriculum materials and administer national, state, and local programs. Regardless of the setting or whether they are working in rural, suburban or urban areas, environmental educators need to be able to deliver instruction and develop materials that effectively foster environmental literacy.

Accreditation provides a means for recognizing institutions of higher education that prepare high quality environmental education professionals. We invite you to use this document to reflect on your own program and apply for recognition based on the *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence* (NAAEE 2017).

About the North American Association for Environmental Education [NAAEE]

For more than four decades, NAAEE has been the leader in promoting excellence in environmental education throughout North America. NAAEE is the only national membership organization dedicated to strengthening environmental education and increasing the visibility and effectiveness of the field. With members in more than 30 countries, over 17,000 members and affiliations, including 54 state, regional, and provincial environmental education organizations, NAAEE's influence stretches across North America and around the world. Key activities include an annual conference averaging 1,000 participants from school systems, universities, non-profit organizations, government agencies, corporations, and other sectors of society; development of tools and resources promoting effective practice, such as the Guidelines for Excellence series, the Framework for Assessing Environmental Literacy, and eePRO; and on-going capacity building and professional development support throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. For more about NAAEE visit **www.naaee.org**.

A Brief History and Overview of Environmental Education Instruction

By the late 1960s, increased public awareness regarding environmental problems began surfacing and a new term, environmental education, was introduced (Disinger, 2005). Much of the work in environmental education has been guided by the Belgrade Charter (UNESCO-UNEP, 1976) and the Tbilisi Declaration (UNESCO, 1978). These two documents furnish an internationally accepted blueprint for environmental education. The Belgrade Charter was adopted by a United Nations conference and provides a widely accepted goal statement for environmental education:

> *The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones.*

Two years later, at the world's first intergovernmental conference on environmental education, the Tbilisi Declaration was adopted. This declaration built on the Belgrade Charter and established three broad goals for environmental education. These goals provide the foundation for much of what has been done in the field since 1978:

- *To foster clear awareness of, and concern about, economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas;*
- *To provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;*
- *To create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups, and society as a whole towards the environment.*

Environmental education seeks to build an effective, environmentally literate citizenry able to participate with creativity and responsibility in a democratic society. Environmental education often begins close to home, encouraging learners to understand and forge connections with their immediate surroundings. The environmental awareness, knowledge, and skills needed for this localized learning provide a basis for moving out into larger systems, broader issues, and a more sophisticated comprehension of causes, connections, and consequences (NAAEE 2010b).

Much of the scholarly work in environmental education has focused on describing the precursors of responsible environmental citizenship and environmental literacy—the types of knowledge, skills and dispositions that describe the environmentally literate citizen. In 1993, NAAEE initiated the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education (naaee.org/our-work/programs/guidelines-excellence) in an effort to describe environmental literacy as well as the need to address the education reform agenda in the United States. Simmons (1995) conducted a review of relevant environmental education literature concerning existing environmental education frameworks and/or models. Seven major components of environmental literacy were identified: affect, ecological knowledge, socio-political knowledge, knowledge of environmental issues, skills, environmentally responsible behaviors, and determinants of environmentally responsible behaviors. This research was used as a starting point in the development of a series of guidelines that set the standards for high quality environmental education.

The series includes *Excellence in Environmental Education—Guidelines for Learning (K–12)* (NAAEE, 2010b, 4th edition), which identifies what learners should know and be able to do, benchmarked by grade level, as environmentally literate citizens. Closely linked to these Learner Guidelines are the *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence* (NAAEE, 2017), which describe, in turn, what educators need to know and be able to do in order to assist learners in meeting these guidelines. However, being an effective environmental educator requires more than competency with a specific set of environmental literacy-related knowledge and skills. It also requires that educators keep the whole learner in mind, and be able to design and implement a range of environmental education experiences for a full spectrum of learners. In addition, environmental educators must be prepared to use assessment and evaluation to continuously improve instruction and programs. These Guidelines form the basis for NAAEE Accreditation of Distinguished College and University Programs.

Purpose of NAAEE Accreditation: Distinguished College and University Programs

NAAEE Accreditation formally recognizes **high quality college and university** programs that **consistently** prepare well–qualified environmental educators who possess the understanding, skills, and dispositions associated with environmental literacy, as well as the ability to apply them in their educational practices. The purpose of Accreditation is to provide a third-party, standards-based review process that:

a) Encourages and recognizes excellence in the preparation and professional development of environmental educators, and
b) Facilitates the in-depth, continual assessment and improvement of environmental education preparation and professional development programs within higher education institutions.

As part of this Accreditation process, higher education programs are asked to provide evidence of how they address each of the six themes identified in the NAAEE *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*, although programs are given flexibility in *how* they are met. There is no one mold into which a program must fit—no set number of courses or experiences, no set examinations or measures. The Accreditation program has been designed with the understanding that college and university programs are unique and how they go about preparing high-quality environmental educators reflects that distinctiveness.

Benefits of Accreditation

NAAEE Accreditation provides third party, standards-based recognition of high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs that engage in the preparation and professional development of environmental educators. While earning Accreditation is a distinctive honor, the *process* of participating in NAAEE's Accreditation program and completing the Self-Study Audit is a major benefit unto itself, providing an important opportunity to:

- Measure program outcomes and performance against well-accepted environmental education criteria
- Use the structured program evaluation and reflection process for evidenced-based program improvement
- Revisit, revise, and clarify program goals, objectives, and implementation strategies
- Document program successes credibly and communicate these successes to internal and external audiences

Standards-based recognition helps programs and institutions:

- Attract and retain students
- Provide evidence of excellence for employers, funders, and donors
- Document program impact for university-wide reviews
- Demonstrate to the public, governing boards, donors, and others that the program is using best practices and preparing well-qualified graduates
- Assure alumni and other supporters that the program maintains high standards

In addition, participation in the Accreditation process benefits the field of environmental education as a whole, allowing us to:

- Expand our knowledge base by documenting and recognizing highly effective environmental education programs
- Share best practices, enriching all programs and the profession
- Leverage continued growth and development of environmental education programs
- Celebrate exemplary environmental education programs

Who Should Apply?

Due to the unique nature of environmental education, this recognition is open to all college/university environmental education (EE) programs that meet the NAAEE *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*, including but not limited to college/university undergraduate and graduate environmental education majors, environmental education minors, environmental education certificate programs, and other cross-disciplinary or integrated studies programs. To determine eligibility, colleges and universities should examine their programs using the rubric included in this document. Colleges/universities might choose entire degree programs for review or areas of emphasis within programs.

It is essential that the Self-Study Audit describe the preparation program and how it addresses each of the six Themes included in the *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence* in terms of both program design and participant assessment.

Because Accreditation examines both how the program design is aligned to the Guidelines Themes and how program participants are assessed against those same Guidelines Themes, you will need to provide assessment data for at least two years. New programs should wait to submit their Self-Study Audit until they have at least two years of assessment data. If more than one program is being submitted for Accreditation, a separate application should be made for each program.

Award Process

Accreditation is awarded for a **five-year** period, at which time programs must reapply.

A panel of environmental education professionals assembled and trained by NAAEE reviews a Self-Study Audit submitted by the applicant. The Audit describes the program and how it addresses each of the six Themes included in the *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*. It is developed using NAAEE's Program Review Rubric as a guide and reflects at least two years of assessment data. (See page 21.)

Reviewers look for evidence that *demonstrates* how the program design (e.g., course, experiences) provides program participants with opportunities to gain the understandings, skills, and dispositions described in each of the six Guidelines Themes. In addition, reviewers look for evidence that *demonstrates* how program participants are assessed for each of the six Guidelines Theme competencies and *establishes the degree to which* program participants have demonstrated their level of competency across each of the six Guidelines Themes (e.g., summary of assessment data).

The process results in two possible recommendations.

A. **Recommendation #1**: Awarding of *NAAEE Accreditation: Distinguished College and University Programs*

   Programs recommended for Accreditation must meet the following criteria:

   All six Guidelines Themes must be met at an acceptable or target level in both program design and participant assessment. This will be determined by the preponderance of the evidence supporting the theme as a whole.

B. **Recommendation #2**: Further development and review of your program is needed.

   Programs recommended for further development and review have not met the above criteria for Accreditation and should continue to refine and review their programs. Programs recommended for additional development are given specific feedback on each of the themes/guidelines. Using the feedback to guide development efforts, programs have the opportunity to resubmit their materials within a two-year time frame of the initial application. After this time period, a new application and fees must be submitted.

NAAEE *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*

Successful environmental educators possess the competencies necessary to help all P–12 students and adults become environmentally literate. The NAAEE *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence* articulate performance-based standards by describing essential knowledge, skills and dispositions for the following six themes:

Theme 1. Environmental Literacy: Educators must be competent in the skills and understandings outlined in *Excellence in Environmental Education—Guidelines for Learning (K–12)* (NAAEE 2010b).

    1.1   Questioning, analysis, and interpretation skills
    1.2   Knowledge of environmental processes and systems
    1.3   Skills for understanding and addressing environmental issues
    1.4   Personal and civic responsibility

Theme 2. Foundations of environmental education: Educators must have a basic understanding of the goals, theory, practice, and history of the field of environmental education.

    2.1 Fundamental characteristics and goals of environmental education
    2.2 How environmental education is implemented
    2.3 The evolution of the field

Theme 3. Professional responsibilities of the environmental educator: Educators must understand and accept the responsibilities associated with practicing environmental education.

    3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice
    3.2 Emphasis on education, not advocacy
    3.3 Ongoing learning and professional development

Theme 4. Planning and implementing environmental education: Educators must combine the fundamentals of high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design and implement effective instruction.

    4.1 Knowledge of learners
    4.2 Knowledge of instructional methodologies
    4.3 Planning for instruction
    4.4 Knowledge of environmental education materials and resources
    4.5 Technologies that assist learning
    4.6 Settings for instruction
    4.7 Curriculum planning

Theme 5. Fostering learning and promoting inclusivity: Educators must enable all learners to engage in culturally relevant open inquiry and investigation, especially when considering environmental issues that are controversial and require students to seriously reflect on their own and others' perspectives.

    5.1   A climate for learning about and exploring the environment
    5.2   An inclusive and collaborative learning environment
    5.3   Flexible and responsive instruction

Theme 6. Assessment and evaluation: Environmental educators must possess the knowledge, abilities, and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs.

    6.1   Learners outcomes
    6.2   Assessment that is part of instruction
    6.3   Improving instruction
    6.4   Evaluating programs

Application Process

The application for Accreditation is based on a Self-Study Audit organized around three major sections (see descriptions of each section below):

    Section I.   Cover Sheet
    Section II.   Program Data
    Section III. Alignment with NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence

All forms required for your application can be downloaded at naaee.org/our-work/programs/higher-education-accreditation.

The college/university program applying for recognition must be a member of the North American Association for Environmental (NAAEE) at the Partner Nonprofit level at the time of application. Membership must be maintained annually.

New programs should wait to submit their Self-Study Audit until they have at least two years of assessment data.

If more than one program is being submitted for Accreditation, a separate application should be made for each program.

Applications are reviewed once a year. The deadline for application is **April 15, annually**. Applications must be submitted electronically via email in a PDF file and sent to accreditation@naaee.org.

Self-Study Audit—Instructions for Completing the *NAAEE Accreditation: Distinguished College and University Programs Application*

The Self-Study Audit involves several steps:

- **Section I: Cover Sheet** (1 page)—Completed form
- **Section II: Program Data** (10 pages, maximum)—Includes vision, mission, philosophy, and goals; description of program; instructor information; and program participant information
- **Section III: Self-Study Audit Report—Alignment to *NAAEE Guidelines for Excellenc*e**—Includes Alignment Matrix (1 page), Course/Experience Information Sheets (1 page per course/experience), Program Design Alignment, Assessment Alignment, and Assessment Results Chart (10 pages, maximum)

Submit a separate report for each program seeking Accreditation. Page limits for each section are indicated in the descriptions below. The report must be one continuous document with sections clearly separated and labeled, and pages consecutively numbered. Avoid references to a website except where indicated in the instructions. **Narratives must be double-spaced. Tables should be single spaced**.

No other appendices or attachments are permitted except where indicated specifically in the instructions. Topics should be addressed in as specific a manner as possible to help to establish "evidence."

All forms required for your application can be downloaded at naaee.org/our-work/programs/higher-education-accreditation.

Section I: Cover Sheet (1 page)

The Cover Sheet must be used for each report submitted. The cover sheet asks for basic contact information and other information about the program and college/university.

Date Submitted: _____

College/University: _____

Address: _____

_____

Name of Preparer: _____

Title/Position of Preparer: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Type of institution:

☐ Public

☐ Private

☐ Other

Average annual enrollment in your institution: _____

Is your institution designated a Minority Academic Institution (e.g., HBCU, HIS, Tribal College)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Section II: Program Data (10 pages maximum)

1. Name of Program

2. Program Vision, Mission, Philosophy and Goals

State the mission, vision, philosophy, and goals of your program as they specifically relate to the NAAEE *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*.

3. Description of Program

Provide the following:

a. **Program Design** (e.g., elementary teacher preparation, secondary preparation; environmental education minor or concentration, endorsement, MA, MS, MAT). This will vary for each applicant; clearly define the design of the specific program for which you are submitting the application. Attach a program of study or advising documentation that shows the recommended/required courses and sequences.)

b. **State or institutional policies** that influence the implementation of the NAAEE Environmental Education Guidelines for Excellence. This may include, but is not limited to, state approved degrees, certificates, endorsements, or absence of such policies.

c. **Historical context for the program**: Describe the major shifts in program structure and changes such as shifts in state certification processes or changing nature of the student population served that have influenced program design.

d. **Any unique aspect(s) of the program**: Describe, for example, research, partnerships, and/or collaborations.

4. Instructor Information:

Complete the following information for each instructor responsible for professional coursework, professional development activities/experiences, or administration/implementation of this program.

Table 1. Instructor Information

Instructor Name	Highest Degree, Field, & College/ University	Assignment: Indicate the role of the instructor in the program	Title/Rank	If applicable, Tenure/Tenure Track (Yes/ No)

5. Program Participants

Describe the number of program participants served by year, and, if available, program participant demographics (age, gender, and ethnicity). Provide **at least two years and up to six years of data** on participants enrolled in the program, beginning with the most recent year for which numbers have been tabulated.

Table 2. Program Participants

Year (report in May)	Number of New Students Enrolled in the Program	Number of Continuing Students Enrolled	Number of Students Who Have Completed the Program	Demographic Characteristics of Program Participants (e.g., age, gender, and ethnicity)

Section III: Self-Study Audit Report— Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence

For Section III, provide evidence that demonstrates 1) **how** your program is aligned to the six NAAEE Guidelines Themes and 2) **how** you assess program participants' competencies for each of the six Guidelines Themes. In addition, provide data that establishes the degree to which program participants have demonstrated their levels of competency across each of the six Guidelines Themes (e.g., summaries of assessment data by year).

Feel free to write a short narrative that provides an overview of your approaches. Reviewers will use the information provided in Section III to determine the degree to which the program design is aligned to each of the six Guidelines Themes **and** the degree to which assessments provide needed evidence that program participants demonstrate their competencies in each of the six Guidelines Themes (see Program Review Rubric).

1. Courses/Experiences Alignment Matrix (1 page maximum)

List all of the courses, learning opportunities, and experiences in your program that address NAAEE Guidelines Themes and rate them as follows: 1 = introductory level, 2 = intermediate level, 3= expert/ mastery level. Add rows as needed.

Table 3. Course Alignment Matrix

Course/Experience where Guidelines Themes are Addressed (1 = introductory 2 = intermediate 3 = expert/ mastery)	Guidelines Themes					
	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5	Theme 6

2. Course/Experience Information Sheet (1 page per core course)

For each core course/experience listed in the Alignment Matrix, provide:
   a. Brief overview, including the catalog description, course designator, and number, if applicable
   b. Description of major course assignments tied to the Guidelines Themes, including a web link to the course assignments if available
   c. Description of how these course assignments are assessed (e.g., rubric, scoring guide, examination) with a web link to these tools if available
   d. Listing of the major topics covered in the course/experience

Limit descriptions of assessments to those that provide evidence of criterion or mastery level of the guidelines. If the assignments and assessments are not available online, please include copies in an appendix. Complete a separate information sheet for each core course/experience. ***Note****: Please provide web links that go directly to the artifacts (assignment, rubric, examination) and not to a general website that requires the reviewer to locate the information referenced.*

3. Program Design Alignment, Assessment Alignment, and Assessment Results Chart (10 pages maximum)

Using information supplied in the Alignment Matrix and the Course/Experience Information Sheets, complete Table 4, providing specific evidence that demonstrates:

- *How* each Guideline Theme is addressed in the program design (columns #1 and #2)
- *How* program participants demonstrate their competencies (e.g., tests, lesson plans, peer teaching, writing prompts) in each of the six Guidelines Themes (column #3)
- *How* you evaluate program participants' competencies (e.g., rubrics, scoring guides) for each of the six Guidelines Themes (column #4)

In column #5 summarize assessment results for a minimum of two years and a maximum of six years of data. Provide assessment results, presented by year, for each item listed/described in column #4. Assessment results might for example include the percentage of program participants earning criterion or mastery level scores or grades.

Include a copy of or a link to all major assignments used to assess program participant competencies, and a copy of or a link to all rubrics, tests, scoring guides, etc. used to determine if a program participant has demonstrated competencies.

It is important to provide specific evidence to support your descriptions and data that document participants' mastery of each Guideline Theme. Refer to the rubrics to gauge the degree to which your program addresses each Guideline Theme. Reviewers are looking for a preponderance of evidence that the program meets all six of the Guidelines Themes in both design and assessment.

Table 4. Program Design Alignment, Assessment Alignment, and Assessment Results Chart (10 pages, maximum)

Theme 1. Environmental Literacy: Educators must be competent in the skills and understandings outlined in *Excellence in Environmental Education—Guidelines for Learning (K—12)*.

    1.1 Question/Analysis
    1.2 Knowledge of systems
    1.3 Address issues
    1.4 Personal responsibility

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results
Courses and/or experiences where Guidelines Themes are addressed (should correlate with Table 3 above). *Use a separate line for each course/ experience.*	Specific description of how Guidelines Themes are taught/ addressed in these courses/ experiences. Indicate both the method (e.g., lecture, discussion, field trips) and the applicable topics (e.g., differentiated instruction, history of EE, instructional strategies).	Description of *how* program participants are assessed for this Guidelines Theme (e.g., written lesson plan, exam, peer teaching, journaling).	Description of *how* these assessments are evaluated for this Guidelines Theme (e.g., rubric, scoring guide, exam grade).	Summary of assessment *results* by year, demonstrating educator competency (e.g., percentage with acceptable score or grade).

Theme 2. Foundations of environmental education: Educators must have a basic understanding of the goals, theory, practice, and history of the field of environmental education.

2.1 Fundamental characteristics and goals of environmental education
2.2 How environmental education is implemented
2.3 The evolution of the field

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results

Theme 3. Professional responsibilities of the environmental educator: Educators must understand and accept the responsibilities associated with practicing environmental education.

3.1 Exemplary environmental education practice
3.2 Emphasis on education, not advocacy
3.3 Ongoing learning and professional development

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results

Theme 4: Planning and implementing environmental education: Educators must combine the fundamentals of high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design and implement effective instruction.

4.1 Knowledge of learners
4.2 Knowledge of instructional methodologies
4.3 Planning for instruction
4.4 Knowledge of environmental education materials and resources
4.5 Technologies that assist learning
4.6 Settings for instruction
4.7 Curriculum planning

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results

Theme 5: Fostering learning and promoting inclusivity: Educators must enable all learners to engage in culturally relevant open inquiry and investigation, especially when considering environmental issues that are controversial and require students to seriously reflect on their own and others' perspectives.

5.1 A climate for learning about and exploring the environment
5.2 An inclusive and collaborative learning environment
5.3 Flexible and responsive instruction

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results

Theme 6. Assessment and evaluation: Environmental educators must possess the knowledge, abilities, and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs.

6.1 Learners outcomes
6.2 Assessment that is part of instruction
6.3 Improving instruction
6.4 Evaluating programs

Courses and Experiences	How Guidelines Themes are Taught	How Program Participants are Assessed	How Assessments are Evaluated	Summary of Results

NAAEE Accreditation: Distinguished College and University Programs

Review Check List

Materials to be submitted for Self-Study Audit	Complete	Incomplete
Section I: Cover Sheet (1 page maximum)		
If incomplete, describe what is missing in Section I:		
Section II: Program Data (10 page maximum)		
1. Name of Program		
2. Program Vision, Mission, Philosophy, and Goals		
3. Description of Program		
4. Instructor Information		
5. Program Participants		
If incomplete, describe what is missing in Section II:		
Section III: Self-Study Audit Report—Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence		
1. Courses/Experiences Alignment Matrix (1 page maximum)		
2. Course/Experience Information Sheet (1 page per core course)		
3. Program Design Alignment, Assessment Alignment, and Assessment Results Chart		
If incomplete, describe what is missing in Section III:		
	Yes	No
Application is complete and qualifies for further review.		

Program Review Rubric

Reviewers will draw primarily from the evidence provided in Section III of your report to complete this rubric and assess your eligibility for Accreditation. Reviewers will be looking for evidence that demonstrates how the program design (e.g., courses, experiences) provides program participants with opportunities to gain the understandings, skills, and dispositions described in each of the six Guidelines Themes. In addition, they will be looking for evidence that *demonstrates how* you assess program participant competencies for each of the six Guidelines Themes. That is, they want to know how you determine whether a program participant has met the expectations outlined in each of the six Guidelines Themes. Finally, reviewers will be considering the degree to which program participants have demonstrated their level of competency across each of the six Guidelines Themes (e.g., summary of assessment data).

Higher education programs must meet **all six themes** at the Acceptable level or higher to earn Accreditation.

Theme 1. Environmental Literacy: Educators must be competent in the skills and understandings outlined in *Excellence in Environmental Education—Guidelines for Learning (K—12).*

- 1.1 Questioning, analysis, and interpretation skills
- 1.2 Knowledge of environmental processes and systems
- 1.3 Skills for understanding and addressing
- 1.4 Personal and civic responsibility

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Environmental Literacy.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Environmental Literacy.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Environmental Literacy.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Environmental Literacy.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Environmental Literacy.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Environmental Literacy.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 1

Theme 2. Foundations of Environmental Education: Educators must have a basic understanding of the goals, theory, practice, and history of the field of environmental education.

2.1 Fundamental characteristics and goals of environmental education
2.2 How environmental education is implemented
2.3 The evolution of the field

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Foundations of Environmental Education.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 2

Theme 3. Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator: Educators must understand and accept the responsibilities associated with practicing environmental education.

3.1   Exemplary environmental education practice
3.2   Emphasis on education, not advocacy
3.3   Ongoing learning and   professional development

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 3

Theme 4: Planning and Implementing Environmental Education: Educators must combine the fundamentals of high-quality education with the unique features of environmental education to design and implement effective instruction.

4.1   Knowledge of learners
4.2   Knowledge of instructional methodologies
4.3   Planning for instruction
4.4   Knowledge of environmental education materials and resources
4.5   Technologies that assist learning
4.6   Settings for instruction
4.7   Curriculum planning

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Planning and Implementing Environmental Education.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 4

Theme 5: Fostering Learning and promoting inclusivity: Educators must enable all learners to engage in culturally relevant open inquiry and investigation, especially when considering environmental issues that are controversial and require students to seriously reflect on their own and others' perspectives.

    5.1   A climate for learning about and exploring the environment

    5.2   An inclusive and collaborative learning environment

    5.3   Flexible and responsive instruction

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Fostering Learning and Promoting Inclusivity.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 5

Theme 6. Assessment and Evaluation: Environmental educators must possess the knowledge, abilities, and commitment to make assessment and evaluation integral to instruction and programs.

    6.1   Learners outcomes
    6.2   Assessment that is part of instruction
    6.3   Improving instruction
    6.4   Evaluating programs

Program Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes			Assessment Alignment to NAAEE Guidelines Themes		
Evidence that programmatic design lacks or minimally meets the necessary components for *Assessment and Evaluation.*	Evidence that programmatic design adequately meets a majority of components necessary for *Assessment and Evaluation.*	Evidence that programmatic design clearly meets all components necessary for *Assessment and Evaluation.*	Assessments indicate a lack of or minimal evidence of participants' competencies in the components for *Assessment and Evaluation.*	Assessments provide adequate evidence of participants' competencies in a majority of the components for *Assessment and Evaluation.*	Assessments provide clear evidence of participants' competencies in all of the components for *Assessment and Evaluation.*
Not Met	Acceptable	Target	Not Met	Acceptable	Target

Comments Theme 6

Selected References

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NOTES:

Information about the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) can be found at naaee.org.

Information about the National Project for Excellence for Environmental Education along with downloadable copies of each of the publications and resources designed to help individuals use the guidelines is available at naaee.org/our-work/programs/guidelines-excellence.