Cultural Competency Assessment Rubric
For Outdoor Environmental Education Programs

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Environmental Education

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Why Measure Cultural Competency?
This cultural competency self assessment has been created for teachers and non-formal educators in order to help them examine and measure the extent to which their programs or classes address culture in design, implementation and evaluation. The self-assessment uses a modified rubric as the format.

Cultural competence is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable education providers to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (adapted from the NASW definition for “cultural competence”, 2000, p. 61). There are numerous criteria at many levels (e.g., individual, program, organization) that can be used to measure cultural competency. This tool focuses on ten criteria that we feel are most relevant to experiential environmental education. The following criteria focus primarily at the level of the program, and to a limited extent the individual.

1) Program makes use of student-selected local issues
2) Program includes place-based field experiences
3) Program involves students in service learning opportunities
4) Program uses community context to develop content
5) Program employs a variety of teaching strategies
6) Program partners with organizations or representatives who model local culture(s)
7) Program utilizes a variety of ways to engage parents and families
8) Program allows students to work in small, collaborative groups
9) Program ensures groups are culturally intermixed
10) Program includes cultural competence training

The tool can be used to provide a snapshot of current efforts or used at regular intervals to measure changes in the cultural competency of a program.

Instructions
Each criterion in the rubric includes a 1-through-5 scale, representing the range of practices that might exist for that criterion. In the first column, the rubric provides a description of what might be considered a high level of cultural competency (“5”). In the last column, the rubric presents a description of a low level of cultural competency (“1”). Please use the descriptions for 1 and 5 to estimate where your practice - for the specific program or class you are assessing - falls on the scoring scale. Most responses will fall between a 1 and a 5. Please circle your score and use the space for comments to provide details and examples that support your score. Keep in mind that the descriptions for columns 1 and 5 are guidelines when writing your comments.
Personal Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School/Organization:</td>
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<td>Subjects/Topics Taught:</td>
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<td>Grade Level/Age:</td>
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<td>Number of Years Teaching:</td>
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Demographic Information

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Your Age:</th>
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<td>Sex:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racial and Ethnic Identification:</td>
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</table>
  - American Indian/Alaska Native  
  - Asian  
  - Black/African American  
  - Hispanic/Latino  
  - Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander  
  - White/Caucasian  
  - Other: ______________________  

| What is your first language?: |  
  - English  
  - Chinese  
  - Creole  
  - Korean  
  - Portuguese  
  - Spanish  
  - Russian  
  - Vietnamese  
  - Other: ______________________  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you consider yourself a native of the area in which you are working?</th>
<th>Yes ☐  No ☐</th>
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Program Information

*Please provide a description of the most recent program or class you conducted with a population whose culture was different from your own. Your responses to the rubric should focus on this class or program.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class/Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(please address the program or class size, subject/topic, dominant culture, class/program duration, and location)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you consider your culture to be the same as that of the students you work with in the program described above?</td>
<td>Yes ☐  No ☐</td>
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### 1. Program Makes Use of Student-Selected Local Issue(s)

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<td></td>
<td>The program makes use of a local issue(s) that more than 75% of the students can relate to as examples, cases, or projects and which the students themselves have a role in identifying.</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The program does not make use of a local issue(s) that students can relate to or have a role in identifying.</td>
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### 2. Program Includes Place-Based Field Experiences

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<td></td>
<td>The program uses field experiences that immerse students in local places that provide a context for learning and foster or build on the students’ connection to place (sense of history, culture, ecology, stewardship). Activities help them articulate meaningful connections between local and global issues and discuss implications for their community.</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Program activities are limited to the classroom and address non-local places without reference to local examples or context for learning. There is no discussion of any local implications of global/national issues.</td>
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### 3. Program Involves Students in Service Learning Opportunities

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<td></td>
<td>Students provide a service to an identified recipient/group in conjunction with instruction and reflection to enrich learning. Student-led projects encourage active participation in the community. Projects empower students to engage community partners and organizations.</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students are learning without providing any service to a group of people or entity OR a service is provided to the community or entity in a manner that is not linked to the curriculum or learning (for example, the collection of canned goods for a food bank is a service, but it is not necessarily connected to the curriculum).</td>
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### 4. Program Uses Community Context to Develop Content

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<th>Comments:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators collect and analyze data on local student population, community demographics and culture. Culturally relevant content is developed jointly by teachers, students and project staff specifically based on student demographic, academic, and cultural context. Efforts are made to understand and engage the community in order to make content more relevant to the local population.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No data is collected on local student population or community demographics. Content derived exclusively from existing textbooks and curriculum.</td>
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### 5. Program Employs a Variety of Teaching Strategies

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<tr>
<td>Teaching strategies are varied, with many techniques of content delivery employed. Students with different learning styles are taken into consideration while developing and delivering instruction. Students are given the tools &amp; instruction to play an active role in learning. Project or place based learning approaches are emphasized. Students learn by doing.</td>
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<td>Teaching strategies are limited to lecture/presentation, textbook or prepackaged activities, and individual assignments. Students are passive learners. Learning originates only from teachers/facilitators through oral or visual instruction. Only facilitators use instructional materials/equipment in demonstrations, without student involvement.</td>
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### 6. Program Partners with Organizations or Representatives who Model Local Culture(s)

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<tr>
<td>The project includes volunteers or staff who can help bridge cultural differences. This may include partners or volunteers from the following groups: local site volunteers, parents, universities or colleges, other state agencies, federal agencies or non-profit organizations. In addition, one or more of these groups take(s) responsibility for a portion of the program AND one or more of these groups has a long-term and formal commitment to support the project.</td>
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<td>No effort is made to include volunteers or staff who can help bridge cultural differences and insert culture into the program.</td>
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### 7. Program Utilizes a Variety of Ways to Engage Parents and Families

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<td></td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<td>Program is designed for complete autonomy from parental and family involvement. Activities are designed with the assumption that families cannot or will not participate. No effort is made to communicate with parents and family members at home. Talents and skills of parents and families are not explored or integrated into program content.</td>
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<td>Parents are engaged in a wide variety of ways including all of the following. (Other strategies not listed here can be used as well).</td>
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<td>• Parents and families are encouraged to participate in all program activities (e.g., field experiences and program-related assignments)</td>
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<td>• Family nights are planned to inform and include all members of student’s family</td>
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<td>• Events at local community centers highlight artisanal skills and knowledge of parents in relation to the program</td>
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<td>• Parents are involved in communicating their expectations, pride and interest in the subject matter (e.g., parent-teacher meetings and/or events, feedback surveys, etc.)</td>
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<td>• Program materials, agendas and/or newsletters are made easily accessible to parents and family members, and are in languages spoken at home (when applicable)</td>
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### 8. Program Involves Regular Work in Small, Collaborative Groups/Teams

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<tr>
<td>Small group/team work is a regular part of instruction with groups of less than seven (7) students working collaboratively on activities with all students having an opportunity to contribute to the group.</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Small group/team work occurs infrequently. Instruction and learning typically involves large groups (&gt;20 students) or individual assignments.</td>
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9. Program Ensures Groups are Culturally Inter-mixed

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<td></td>
<td>When working in small groups or teams students are culturally integrated to allow many perspectives into discussions and group work (integration can be measured in a number of ways, including: sex, race, ethnicity, learning level, age, etc.).</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No small group/team work or No attention to the mix of small groups or teams.</td>
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10. Program Includes Cultural Competence Training and Assessment

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher/educator has completed a training on cultural competency (such as the <em>Common Beliefs Survey</em>) and are actively monitoring the cultural competency of their programs (such as this cultural competency assessment tool).</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher/educator has not completed training on cultural competency and has not made any efforts to monitoring improvements in the cultural competency of their programs/classes.</td>
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**TOTAL:  /50**
Additional Questions

1. On a scale of 1-10 rank your level of familiarity with cultural competency in education: _______________

2. Rank the following instructional skills/capabilities terms of their importance to learning in your program/classroom, with one being the most important and five being the least important. (each item must have a different rank)

   ______ Classroom management
   ______ Cultural competency
   ______ Content knowledge/expertise
   ______ Instructional technology
   ______ Instructional delivery method(s)

3. In your opinion, what is the most important aspect of cultural competency in the context of education and learning?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. In the last two years, what has been your most important source of information and teacher professional development in the area of cultural competency?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. What specific examples from the last two years can you give to illustrate changes in your ability to address cultural differences of students and community populations?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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