

Lesson Plan: Re: PSY 2012 (Introduction to Psychology) & Earth Charter

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Description of Lesson Plan: Introductory psychology students will reflect and connect with parts of the Earth Charter as it relates to pertinent chapters in the psychology textbook. Selected readings, class discussions, critical thinking responses, and service learning experiences will be used to build connections between the materials, instill embedded thinking, and enliven the course and Earth charter concepts.

Application of Lesson Plan:

1. *Connecting Mental Illness with Earth Charter, III). Social and Economic Justice, 9c –*

Students will have read the assigned psychology textbook chapter on psychological disorders. The professor will either have already introduced the class to the Earth Charter or he or she may introduce it in class after this assigned reading. The professor will lead a discussion of the plight of the mentally ill, that is, they are one of the last bastions of the oppressed and underrepresented people in the country. For example, it is socially acceptable for a person in casual conversation to tell a joke in which a person with a mental disorder is the butt of the joke. Even the media, television in particular, portrays people with psychological disorders as pathetic, and helpless or aggressive and violent. After examining this representation of the mentally ill in the American society, the professor will then turn to the Earth Charter, no. 9c that states – “Recognize the ignored, protect the vulnerable, serve those who suffer, and enable them to develop their capacities and to pursue their aspirations.”

After discussing this section of the Earth Charter these assignments will be given:

- A). Write a 1-2 page reflection paper in which the student reflects upon the how our society treats people with mental illnesses and how they should be treated. Include examples, if possible.
- B). An additional assignment or an extra credit assignment (depending upon how the professor wishes to include this assignment into the students’ grade) would involve a Service Learning experience. The Professor would take the students to visit and work for a shift at local soup kitchen or a homeless shelter. After this experience the professor would conduct a reflection activity which could be either discuss the SL in relations to the Earth Charter and course content on the mentally ill and (or both) write a reflection paper on their experience.

The professor can conclude this lesson with the students reflecting and discussing how they would feel if he or she or a family member experienced certain mental illnesses and lost their jobs or were unable to work and be part of mainstream society and what an individual could do about it.