

Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work Education Grant
Final Report

Date: September 28, 2018

Institution: School of Social Work, University of Maryland, Baltimore

Name of Project: Environmental Social Work Practice: A Global Perspective

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Policy Abstract:

This project included the development and piloting of an innovative joint BSW/MSW course that will not only provide important content on environmentalism for social work students interested in international social work but also test synchronous teaching of the course in India and the United States. The course, Environmental Social Work Practice: A Global Perspective, will be offered as an independent study in AY 2018-19 for BSW students at UMBC, and as an MSW elective course in both countries. It will be piloted and taught by social work faculty from both countries.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the proposed project were:

- 1) Integrate environmentalism with social work practice
 - a. Define critical concepts and theoretical frameworks
 - b. Apply concepts and frameworks across client systems
- 2) Identify the role of social works in addressing environmental issues

- a. Describe clinical roles and apply in life examples
 - b. Define policy roles in national and international context
- 3) List factors associated with the misuse of the environmental
 - a. Analyze the associated between the misuse of the environment and economic gains and poverty
 - b. Apply ethical decision making to decision regarding the use of the environment
- 4) Apply concepts of social justice to environmental social work practice
 - a. Describe strategies to advocacy for environmental issues
 - b. Demonstrate collaborative effort associated with environmental justice

Desired Outcomes

This project includes the development and piloting of an innovative joint BSW/MSW course that will not only provide important content on environmentalism for social work students interested in international social work but also test synchronous teaching of the course in India and the United States. The course, *Environmentalism: Social Work Practice and Policy* will be offered as an independent study for BSW students at UMBC, and as an MSW elective course in both countries. It will be piloted and taught by social work faculty from both countries.

Activities Completed

1. The University of Maryland Baltimore provided support for Nicole Mattocks, an SSW PhD student focusing on environmental social work, to conduct extensive interviews in India in June 2016 with Rajagiri faculty and students, along with local officials. From these interviews, she identified environmental social work content currently being taught at Rajagiri, along with the environmental topics of greatest concern in Kerala. The most significant concerns are trash, water pollution, and weather-related environmental damage.

The above data have informed the continuing development of the course syllabus.

2. Clark Shah-Nelson, the SSW Assistant Dean for Educational Technology at UMB, went to Kochi in July 2017 to consult with Rajagiri media staff about technical strategies for teaching the course. With the support of KAKI funding, Mr. Shah-Nelson is developing a handbook of the technical strategies for both the US and India schools. This handbook will include details about a combination of strategies: software programs to support synchronous interactive teaching, pre-

recorded lectures, online course software for blogging, resource directories, and software to facilitate small groups of US and India students to work on projects synchronously. The handbook will also include instructions for students, faculty, and technical staff.

Mr. Shah-Nelson and the PIs have met and are developing a plan to map how each course topic and activity will be delivered. For instance, the lectures that will be pre-recorded and posted, rather than delivered live have been identified and will be taped during the Spring 2018 term.

3. Dr. Caroline Long Burry, one of the PIs, met with Rajagiri faculty, administration, and students in 2017 to update them on progress and learn more about activities at Rajagiri in support of course development.
4. Dr. Carolyn Tice presented KAKI grant findings at the International Association for Social Work with Groups Conference in New York City, New York in June 2017.
5. The PIs have developed the course. Course assignments have been developed. All readings have been identified.
6. The course is scheduled to be taught Spring 2018. The course will be assessed through the following teaching evaluations, student surveys, a grading rubric and discussion groups.

Strengths and Weaknesses

A particular strength of the project were the meetings that were held throughout the academic year at the School of Social Work, University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) to discuss project designs, implementations, and evaluations of a course in environmentalism. Further, the collaborations with the School of Social Work and BSW and MSW programs at the Rajagiri College of Social Services, Kochi, India expanded the thinking of all involved.

The Kochi area of India experienced significant flooding in 2018 which necessitated a postponement of much of their work associated with the grant. This lead to unavoidable delays in the development of the course and in necessary points of collaborations between the universities.

Deliverables

Please see the attached course syllabus. With a semester, the technical guide will be delivered for posting on the website.