



The iSMA, ESMA and AASM¹

ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES FOR SOCIAL MARKETING

Date: September 19, 2014

The academic competencies for social marketing outlined in this document are intended as guidance for instructors of ***academic courses and designers of academic and nonacademic certificate programs*** in social marketing. They provide a set of participant-focused benchmarks for the development of course curricula and certificate completion requirements. These competencies are not meant to prescribe or restrict the content of academic social marketing degree programs. It is anticipated that degree-granting programs in social marketing may have more competencies than are outlined here.

The development of these competencies was formally begun at a collaboratory held at the Social Marketing Conference in Clearwater Beach, FL, USA in June, 2012. Since then, the full list of competencies generated by that discussion have been reviewed and revised by the AASM, ESMA and iSMA Boards of Directors. The iSMA Board approved this version September 19, 2014. The ESMA and AASM approved earlier in September 2014.

It is planned that these competencies will be revisited in 2016 and potentially revised. Comments about these competencies can be sent to Nancy Lee (nancyrlee@msn.com).

¹ iSMA: International Social Marketing Association. ESMA: European Social Marketing Association. AASM: Australian Association of Social Marketing.

ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES IN SOCIAL MARKETING (September, 2014)

Upon completion of a social marketing certificate or academic course, a participant should be able to:

1. Describe social marketing to colleagues and other professionals and differentiate it from other approaches to influencing behaviors and social change.
2. Work with colleagues and stakeholders to identify community, state, province, national, regional, and/or international priorities, and identify those for which a social marketing approach may be appropriate.
3. Identify and segment populations and select appropriate, high priority segments.
4. Prioritize and select measurable behaviors (not just awareness or attitudes) of individuals, organizations and/or policy makers to influence.
5. Design and conduct situational analysis and formative research, employing mixed methodologies needed to understand current audience barriers and benefits, as well as competing behaviors and direct and indirect competition.
6. Select and apply relevant social marketing, behavioral, exchange and social science theories, models, frameworks and research to inform development of a social marketing strategic plan, one that meets the needs and wants of the intended audience.
7. Create an integrated social marketing mix strategy that extends beyond communications only campaigns, with consideration of all appropriate evidence-based tools and theory needed to influence a desired behavior.
8. Critically reflect and test the effectiveness, acceptability, and ethics of potential social marketing strategies with representatives of target audiences and stakeholders, and adapt as necessary.
9. Finalize an implementation plan, incorporating opportunities for scaling up and sustainability.
10. Design and implement an evaluation plan, including a monitoring system to assure programs are on track to achieve goals and meet agreed quality and efficiency standards.
11. Apply ethical principles to the conduct of research, developing, implementing and evaluating a social marketing plan.
12. Document and communicate the results of social marketing initiatives to colleagues, stakeholders, communities and other relevant organizations and groups.