Level 1: Introduction to Packrafting Instructor Criteria

Overview

Fundamentally, participants are expected to have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Course (IDW, ICE, or ICW).

Course Prerequisites

- Acknowledgement of personal compliance with the ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC)
- Be a current ACA member
- Completion of the appropriate level skills course, assessment course, or equivalent skills

Course Duration

Combined Instructor Development Workshop (IDW) and Instructor Certification Exam (ICE) **-** Minimum 2 days (16 hours).

Course Location / Accessible Venues

Flat water, protected from wind, waves, and outside boat traffic, with current less than 0.5 knots, and within swimming distance of shore.

Course Size

5 Instructor Candidates : 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional qualified assistant, the ratio can be 10 : 2. The maximum number of instructor candidates permitted is 10.

Instructor Trainer

This certification course may be offered by Level 1: Introduction to Packrafting (or higher) ACA Instructor Trainers or Instructor Trainer Educators.

Succeeding Courses

Level 2: Essentials of River Packrafting Skills, Assessment, or Certification Course

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The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content and sequence of evaluation is to be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location, time allowance, and be craft appropriate.

General Requirements for all ACA Certification Candidates

- Be at least 18 years old
- Demonstrate general knowledge of ACA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW and ICE)
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education and Instruction Council
- Have and maintain first aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material, unassisted, in the appropriate venue

Certification Maintenance Requirements

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and properly report the courses using the ACA Course Management System (CMS)

- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually
- Maintain appropriate CPR and first aid certification for the duration of certification

ACA Level 1 Instructor Requirements

Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA administrative processes:

- How to register and report a course (with and without insurance)
- An understanding of the ACA Waiver and Release of Liability
- A familiarity with the ACA website and the resources/policies available within

Demonstrate a knowledge of teaching and learning theory:

- Understand multiple modalities of teaching and how they impact different learners
- Differentiate instruction targeting different learners
- Use effective teaching methods
- Present information effectively, both prepared and impromptu
- Effectively make documented skill assessments

Demonstrate the following:

- Positive interpersonal skills
- Appropriate group management skills including leadership and judgment
- Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site

Demonstrate ability to paddle efficiently and comfortably, in flat water:

- Boat stability (trim, stance, etc.)
- Efficient and effective paddle placement for intended maneuver
- Safe and effective body usage: bio-mechanics (body, linkage, and rotation)

- Parts of strokes: CPR (catch, power, recovery), static and dynamic

Demonstrate a clear understanding and the ability to teach the various unique packraft-specific considerations, including but not limited to:

- Packraft designs, configurations, features, accessories, outfitting, and rigging
- Performance strengths and weaknesses of different packraft designs
- Packraft materials, maintenance, and repair techniques
- Best practices for securing gear in boats, and for packing and carrying boats and equipment
- Boat-based rescue techniques
- Making safe gear choices while considering weight sensitivity
- Safety implications of easy access to remote paddling environments

The ability to teach and model:

- Forward
- Back
- Sweeps (forward and reverse)
- Draws (out of water and in water recovery)
- Stern rudder

The ability to teach and model these basic maneuvers effectively:

- Enter and launch the boat from shore in a controlled manner, checking for clear departure
- Propel the boat forward in a straight line 15-20 boat lengths
- Stop the boat within two boat lengths
- Move the boat backwards 3-4 boat lengths
- Turn the boat from a stationary position 180° to the right and left
- Move the boat sideways 10 feet (3 meters) to each side

- Propel the boat in a figure of 8 course around markers 3-4 boat lengths apart
- Turn the boat while maintaining forward motion 90° to the right and left
- Arrive at destination point, checking for clear approach, and exit the boat in a controlled and safe manner

Demonstrate the ability to teach and model rescue techniques and concepts effectively, and as appropriate to craft:

- Principles of Rescue
    - Rescue Priorities: people, boat, paddle, gear
    - Responsibilities of the group, rescuer, swimmers
- Demonstrate the use of appropriate rescue and safety gear for the boat and planned activity
- Boat based rescue techniques:
    - Calmly exit the boat after a capsize, using proper body position and contact with the craft and paddle
    - Paddle recovery options
    - Strategies for boat recovery
    - Self-rescue: swimming with equipment
    - Swimmer tow options
    - Swimmer re-entry/re-mount techniques (i.e., heel hook, rescue sling, etc.)
    - Techniques for bumping, bulldozing, or towing a boat or swimmer to shore
    - Assisted rescues: boat over boat or side by side or others appropriate to conditions
- Emptying water from the boat (on shore, bailers, sponges, etc.)

Demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to teach, the following knowledge and skills effectively:

- Weather conditions, forecasts, and other environmental hazards (water, weather, wind, waves)

- Evaluating hazards to navigation
- Importance of developing good judgment and group responsibility for a trip
- Evaluating ability, water comfort, and confidence of participants prior to trip
- Warm ups, conditioning, and physical training to reduce injury
- Securing boat for transport using proper tie downs, straps, or knots
- Proper techniques to safely lift and carry the boat on shore
- Life jackets appropriate for the individual's size, craft, and activity, assuring all others in the group are properly wearing their life jacket
- Inspect the boat and all safety equipment to meet state, federal, and local requirements for the vessel and activity
- Safe boating practices including behavior, substance abuse, on water and land etiquette, and Leave No Trace ethics
- Elements of a float plan (who, what, when, where, filing practices)
- Review personal equipment needed for the boat, activity, and environment
- Prepare the boat for departure: stowing gear securely, and ensuring boat trim is balanced
- Review paddling equipment, terminology (boat and paddle), and care of gear
- How to hold the paddle in correct orientation and grip for effective paddling
- Personal and group gear including, but not limited to:
    - Environmental supplies (food, water, appropriate clothing, sunscreen, etc.)
    - Navigational and signaling tools (maps, charts, whistle, etc.)
    - Safety and rescue tools
    - Repair kit
    - First aid kit (appropriate to training)
- Review the dangers of paddlesports and how to plan an appropriate course to avoid potential hazardous situations

- How to avoid and prevent cold water shock, hypothermia, and hyperthermia by choosing proper clothing and recognizing and treating early symptoms
- Recognize the importance of hydration
- Appropriately use communication (paddle, hand, and whistle) signals
- Basic navigational rules for inland waterways
- Awareness of the group and effective on water management techniques; minimum/maximum standards
- Secure the boat and equipment before leaving unattended, with attention paid to environment and conditions

Demonstrate leadership, group management skills, experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective instructor

Notes:

An ACA Level 1: Introduction to Paddling Instructor is expected to be able to demonstrate and teach everything on the Level 1: Skills Course and Level 1: Skills Assessment for their craft.

This course content meets the National On Water Standards for human powered craft (https://www.usnows.org/assess-and-update). The National On Water Standards for human powered craft (NOWS) can be used to:

- *Evaluate other paddlers and provide effective feedback*
- *Effectively make documented skill assessments*

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This curriculum is managed by the ACA Introduction to Paddling (IPC) Committee. To connect with the leadership of this committee, please view the SEIC Committee rosters on the ACA website.