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## INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

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The goal of the Instructor Certification Workshop (ICW) is to develop and evaluate skills in one multi-day session. It combines the elements of both the IDW and ICE explained below. These workshops are NOT beginner paddling courses. Candidates typically arrive with a wide variety of skills and knowledge already in place. Your own skills, knowledge, and positive attitude for change and growth greatly affect your success in this course. Participation is NOT a guarantee of certification. This document explains the requirements and how to be best prepared for success at your desired level. Certification is a journey and our goal is to help you be a successful, safe, competent, and effective instructor of paddlesports. As an Instructor Trainer friend is fond of saying, **“Please be aware that it is unrealistic to expect to be certified as an ACA instructor without prior formal instruction and significant teaching experience or the ability to paddle and teach as if you have both!”**

**Instructor Development Workshops (IDW)** help students become acquainted with the ACA model of effective instruction, paddling and leadership necessary in canoeing or kayaking. The teaching techniques, paddling skills, technical knowledge and rescue and safety competencies necessary for successful completion of the Instructor Certification Exam will be reviewed and modeled during this course. We will focus on fine-tuning each candidate's paddling, rescue, group management and teaching skills, as well as expanding their knowledge in various aspects of the sport. Each participant will be assigned a 5-10-minute presentation aimed at the beginner paddler, as well as mini dry land and on-water topics to present to the group. These dress rehearsals will allow candidates to receive valuable feedback from their peers and the Instructor Trainers (ITs). The IDW is a prerequisite for the Instructor Certification Exam.

The **Instructor Certification Examination (ICE)** primarily serves as an opportunity to evaluate the Instructor Candidate for certification. Participation in this course does not guarantee certification. Candidates should arrive proficient in all skills on the appropriate ACA course outlines before attending the ICE. Throughout the certification process, candidates will be instructed and evaluated in the areas below. Candidates must be able to perform all of the related skills, competently on a consistent basis. For example – a candidate must demonstrate the ACA models of paddling strokes consistently, to be considered at a passing level. The four skill competency areas are:

- **Technical Knowledge** - General knowledge of the ACA and your discipline (canoeing/kayaking)
- **Paddling Skills** - Technical proficiency at the desired certification level. (See links for instructor criteria at each level on the course website OR the ACA website)
- **Teaching Ability** – Good physical modeling, the ability to break down maneuvers and skills into their components, clear, concise, organized and thorough presentations aimed at the beginner paddler, people skills and general professionalism.
- **Safety Awareness and Technical Rescue Skills** candidates must demonstrate comprehension and competency at each level leading to and including desired certification level.

Each candidate will be assigned a 5-10 minute teaching topic to prepare. The Instructor Trainers will pick topics for the candidate to present during the IDW/ICE. This may include classroom, shore-side and on-water topics. These presentations should be concise talks **geared to beginning students in an ACA skills class**. This is not a chance for you to tell us how much you know, but rather to demonstrate how well you can prioritize the available information to give a beginner what they need to know, in an efficient and effective manner. In addition, each candidate will be assigned impromptu (1 to 3 minute) presentations on a very basic topics, which should be familiar to all instructors (i.e. sizing lifejackets) and various strokes and maneuvers to present to the group.

Various levels of certification are **possible** in this 3 or 5 day ICW if the Instructor Candidate meets the ACA proficiency requirements. Each level builds on the previous one and so ALL candidates must begin on Day 1 of the course.

## **Available Certifications:**

**(5 Day Canoe ICW)**

**1. Introduction to Canoe**

**2. Essentials of River Canoe**

**3. Basic River Canoe**

**4. Whitewater Canoe**

**(3 Day Kayak ICW)**

**1. Introduction to Kayak**

**2. Essentials of River Kayak**

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## **How to Prepare for the Course:**

- Look over the resource materials your Instructor Trainer will send you after you register for the course.
- Be familiar with the ACA web site – [www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)
- **Print out and bring** requested items
- Go out and paddle as much as possible prior to the course to practice and warm up.
- Be in good physical condition. The days are long and full.
- Come with an open mind.
- Bring any paddling books/materials that you feel will be helpful.
- **Make sure you have personal paddling gear and clothing for any weather condition.**
- The class starts on schedule. Arrive early to give yourself plenty of time to unload and prepare your boat and equipment.
- Write up your presentation outlines, and resource handouts. Be prepared to give a 5 to 10 minute talk **aimed at the beginner** at anytime. Gather your teaching and presentation aids.

## **What to Bring:**

- Bring all of your personal equipment, including appropriate boats and accessories (lifejackets, helmets, skirts, paddles, rescue gear, etc.) to be on and in the water.
- Bring a folding chair or something to sit on and a notebook and pencil.
- Include lots of snacks and fluid. Lunches will be working lunches, so bring a bag lunch that is simple and quick.  
**It is usually not possible to leave the training site to purchase lunch.**
- While we will try to cover the material in 8 to 9 hours during the day, be prepared to spend evenings involved in classroom presentations, group study, video review, etc. as necessary. Therefore keep dinner plans flexible.
- ACA membership number and appropriate paperwork (waivers, outlines, etc.).
- A copy/proof of current First Aid and CPR certification
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While certification is an eventual goal of most candidates, it should be emphasized that becoming certified as an ACA instructor is a learning process. Instructor candidates come to IDW's and ICE's with a wide range of prior paddling instruction and teaching experience. **Candidates are encouraged to arrive at the ICE with an open mind and a willingness to take and give constructive feedback, and to look at this process as part of a journey to more efficient and effective paddling.**

We will do our best to make this course educational and fun. If you have any questions regarding the class please do not hesitate to contact me. There will be additional Instructors/Trainers to help you learn.

Sincerely,

Beth Wiegandt

ACA Instructor/Instructor Trainer:

Canoe, Kayak, River Safety and Rescue, SUP

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