



# Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding

## 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 Level 2 certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

### **Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):**

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket\*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft\*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation\*

*\* To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

**Recommended Course Preparation:** Completion of the Level 2 skills course, assessment course, or possess the equivalent skills.

**Instructor Trainer:** This certification course may be offered by Level 2 or higher ACA Instructor Trainers or Instructor Trainer Educators in their discipline.

**Course Duration:** Combined IDW and ICE - Minimum 4 days (32 hours, up to 8 hours can be virtual).

### **Course Location / Venue:**

- Access to safe landing within 0.5 nautical miles/0.9 kilometers from shore (required)



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- 5 - 10 knot winds (required)
- Note: conditions, if present, should not exceed 1 foot/0.3 meters waves or 2 knot currents.

**Class Ratio:** 5 Instructor Candidates : 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional instructor or qualified assistant the ratio can be 10:2

**Succeeding Courses:** Skills Courses, Assessments, and Instructor Certification courses:

- Level 3: Surf Stand Up Paddleboarding
- Level 3: Coastal Stand Up Paddleboarding
- Level 3: River Stand Up Paddleboarding
- Level 4: Whitewater Stand Up Paddleboarding
- Level 5: Advanced Whitewater SUP

**General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:**

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW and ICE)
- Be a full ACA member
- Upon successful completion, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid certification and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of boardsports, paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue
- Instructors are expected to demonstrate, teach, model, and assess everything on the ACA assessment course outline, which corresponds to their level/craft.

**Maintenance Requirements:**

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period (at least one must be at your highest level of certification), and report the results to the National Office
- 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

**Level 2: Essentials of Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) Instructor Requirements:**

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

- 1) Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA Course Reporting:
  - How to register, run & report a course (with and without insurance)
  - How to register, run & report a skills assessment
  - An understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- 2) Demonstrate a knowledge of teaching and learning theory:
  - Understanding of how people learn.



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- Use of effective teaching methods.
  - How to provide effective feedback.
  - Positive interpersonal skills
- 3) Model, teach and assess the following skills in Level 2 conditions. Emphasis should be placed on paddle articulation (Catch - Power - Recovery), fluid transitions, utilization of board trim, and effective transfer of power from the paddle through the feet.

### **Stances:**

- Prone
- Sitting
- Kneeling
- Standing - Neutral with variation/slight stagger
- Hybrid/modified stance
- Surf Stance
- Footwork: regular & goofy stance

### **Strokes:**

- Forward Stroke: demonstrate at least two effective forward stroke techniques using efficient transfer of power at varying speeds in a variety of conditions.
- Canted Forward Stroke: modifying blade angle and catch position to maintain direction of travel.
- Reverse Stroke
- Sweeps (Forward / Reverse): modifying the path of the paddle for most effective power delivery
- Draws (side, sculling, hanging draw, draw on the move)
- Draws to nose/tail and Cross Nose (Static and Dynamic): modifying the path and the angle of the paddle for most efficiency

### **Maneuvers:**

- Launching and Landing: Beach, dock, shoreline.
- Forward Paddling: 200 feet/61 meters paddle in a straight line without changing sides; must demonstrate on both the right and left side. (Example: canted stroke or other effective means).
- Reverse Paddling: Paddle backwards 2 board lengths maintaining directional control without switching hands. (Example: reverse stroke & cross nose draw combination or other effective means).
- Stop: Completely stop the SUP from a good speed in less than 2 board lengths.
- Bracing: Allowing the body to recover and maintain balance using the paddle as a support when falling towards or away from the blade.
- 360: Rotate SUP 360 degrees using forward sweeps, reverse sweeps, draw to nose, and cross nose draws.
- Lateral Movement: Use draws to travel sideways (20 feet/6 meters) on both sides.
- Turning on the Move: Sweep strokes and static draws while underway to turn board
- Board Trim: Transfer weight from nose to tail and rail to rail to affect momentum and maneuverability



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- Side Slip: Move board sideways while underway to avoid an obstacle (Example: Draw on the move or Hanging Draw)
- Pivot Turn: pivot 180 degrees in place with weighted tail
- Moving Pivot Turn: Pivot 180 degrees while underway with weighted tail
- Paddle a course using a variety of L2 strokes & maneuvers with an emphasis on blended strokes, controlled tight turns, and efficient board control while maintaining momentum. (Example: Figure of 8 Course or other effective means).

### 4) Rescues

- Techniques for falling
- Board remount
- Assisted remounts
  - Side-by-side
  - Board flip rescue
  - Or other effective means
- Methods for board and gear recovery
- Towing
  - Contact Tow
  - Leash Tow
  - Tow Line
  - Or other effective means
- Rescue priorities
  - STEVE: Self, Team, Everyone else, Victim, Equipment
  - SAFER: Stop, Assess, Formulate, Execute, Review/Reflect
  - T-RETHROG: Talk, REach, THrow, ROw, Go
- Communication within the group and to the outside world
  - Float Plan
  - Paddle signals
  - Whistle use
  - Cell Phone, VHF Radio, AIS System (based on venue)

### 5) SUP Knowledge

#### History of SUP:

- Indigenous Roots to Modern Day SUP

#### SUP Equipment:

- SUP Board
  - Design (all-around, touring, racing, surf, whitewater)
  - Construction (composite, plastic, inflatable, foam board)
  - Parts
  - How to Carry: 2-person, solo handle, solo overhead or other effective means
- SUP Paddle
  - Design (intended use, blade angle, blade size, shape)
  - Construction (composite, plastic, aluminum, foam core blade, wood)
  - Parts
  - Sizing (fixed and adjustable paddles)
  - Effective hand placement on the paddle



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- PFDs
  - Inflatable
  - Inherently buoyant
  - How to properly fit and use a PFD
- SUP Leash
  - Types (coiled, straight, combo, quick release)
  - Parts
  - When & how to use
- Safety Equipment
  - Dry bags, waterproof containers, deck bags
  - First aid kit
  - Repair kit
  - Communication devices (cell phones, VHF radio, etc.)
  - Sound signaling device (whistle)
  - Tow Rope
  - Additional gear for your paddling environment (signaling devices, white light, hydration & snacks, extra layers of clothing, etc.)

### Environmental Conditions:

- Evaluate environmental conditions
  - Weather conditions, forecasts, and other environmental hazards
    - 4Ws: Water, Weather, Wind, Waves
    - Current dynamics and hazards (river and/or tidal)
    - Distance from shore
    - How to prevent cold water shock, hypothermia and hyperthermia and how to recognize and treat early symptoms
- Evaluate hazards
  - Launching/Landing
  - Navigational Rules of the Road
  - How to plan an appropriate course to avoid potential hazardous situations
- Paddler and Instructor Awareness
  - Review the curriculum in Level 1 Instructor Criteria and Nows document
  - Create a welcoming environment for everyone
  - Select appropriate venue for group skill & experience
  - Inspect the board and all safety equipment to meet state, federal, and local requirements for the vessel and activity
  - Leave No Trace ethics
  - Awareness of SUP destinations for all levels of paddlers in the area

### 6) Group and Incident Management Skills

- Evaluating ability, water comfort, and confidence of participants prior to trip
- Effective strategies to prepare physically and mentally for paddling
- Importance of developing good judgment and group responsibility for a trip
- Awareness of the group and effective on-water management techniques
- Effective route planning and a back-up for an L2 outing/class/trip
- Communication Strategies
  - Pre-trip communication



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- Put-in/Launch Briefing
- On-Water communication
  - CLAP: Communication, Line of Sight, Awareness/Avoidance, Position
  - Paddle/Whistle signals
  - VHF Radios
- Elements of a float plan (Who, What, When, Where, filing practices)
- Group and personal equipment & preparations
- Debrief/Reflections/Check for retention

***Note: An Instructor is expected to be able to demonstrate and teach everything on the Level 2 Essentials of SUP Skills Course and Level 2 Essentials of SUP Skills Assessment for their craft.***