



# Safety Education and Instruction Council

## Policy Manual

Revised 10.16.2020

This POLICY MANUAL contains the official policies of the AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION'S SAFETY EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION COUNCIL (SEIC).

This Manual and SEIC Policies can be amended or revised as needed to meet the needs of the ACA and the SEIC. Changes must be approved by majority vote of the SEIC at any official SEIC meeting. All such changes shall be documented and published as dated addenda to this document. Only verbatim referenced quotes of these official policies may be used elsewhere as SEIC policy statements.

Policies, course outlines, insurance documents and all other SEIC documents shall be considered in force after approval by the SEIC and subsequent publication on the ACA website.

Waivers for exceptions to SEIC policy must be made in writing to the Safety Education and Instruction Department (SEI) at the ACA National Office, and to the SEIC Chair.

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## CHAPTER 1 - ACA INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

- A. The ACA is committed to an educational environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Harassment due to gender, race, religion, or other protected characteristics is both discriminatory and illegal, and will not be tolerated by the ACA. Therefore, the ACA expects that all relationships between participants in workshops will be professional and free of bias, prejudice and harassment. Complaint procedures and additional information are available by contacting the Executive Director of the American Canoe Association.
- B. The ACA authorizes certified Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators the use of the ACA logo and marks with the following qualifications.
1. ACA membership and SEIC registration must be in effect at the time of logo use. Should ACA membership or SEIC registration lapse, use of logo and marks is suspended and all printed materials must be destroyed regardless of quantity. Continued use of ACA logo and marks will be considered fraudulent.
  2. Instructors/Instructor Trainers/Instructor Trainer Educators may identify themselves as ACA-certified. Their organization, employer, host or sponsor may not claim to be “ACA certified” without an express written contract in force with the ACA National Office.
  3. Any use of the ACA logo and marks comes under the authority of the ACA’s acceptable use policy. The ACA reserves the right to selectively withdraw individual use in any portrayal of the ACA name, logo and marks that, in the sole opinion of the ACA, is of an offensive, inappropriate or unwholesome nature.
- C. Use of the ACA’s instructional insurance program requires:
1. Current ACA Instructor, Instructor Trainer or Instructor Trainer Educator certification
  2. Current ACA Membership and SEIC Registration
  3. Current First Aid and age appropriate CPR
  4. Use of the current unaltered *ACA Waiver and Release of Liability*
- This waiver must be signed and dated by each participant prior to the start of the ACA insured instructional program, and a digital copy of the signed waiver must be submitted to the ACA as part of approved course reporting procedures.
- D. The ACA reserves the right to revoke or suspend a certification for cause when an Instructor/Instructor Trainer/Instructor Trainer Educator’s conduct has the potential to be detrimental to the Association or its reputation. Any illegal action which occurs during the course of the performance of ACA instructional duties will be considered sufficient cause for revocation of all certifications. Instructors/Instructor Trainers/Instructor Trainer Educators are expected to follow best practices as described in the ACA’s Best Practices for Paddlers and Paddlesport Program brochure and additional documentation. Allegations, concerns and appeals regarding an Instructor/Instructor Trainer/Instructor Trainer Educator’s conduct may be presented to the SEIC Standards Committee in writing, via the SEI Department. Any investigation of an Instructor/Instructor Trainer/Instructor Trainer Educator will follow due process and allow full opportunity for rebuttal.
- E. ACA courses are open to all individuals who satisfy the Essential Eligibility Criteria (see Appendix III).
- F. SEIC business is conducted via electronic communication. All Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators must have access to a valid email address and use the Course Management System (CMS) for the submission of all course documentation, i.e., registration, reporting, insurance requests, etc.

## CHAPTER 2 - ACA INSTRUCTORS

- A. DUTIES: ACA Instructors teach paddling skills using approved methods and techniques, after qualifying in various disciplines. Specific skills within an instructor's scope of practice are identified in appropriate course outlines. ACA Instructors are expected to represent and promote the ACA in a positive manner. ACA Instructors may issue participation cards to students and in some cases may perform skill assessments. Instructors may not certify other instructors.
- B. SELECTION CRITERIA:
1. Instructors shall be at least 18 years old
  2. Instructors must maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration. Full ACA membership is required for participation in an Instructor Development Workshop (IDW). SEIC registration is required upon successful completion of an Instructor Certification Examination (ICE).
  3. Satisfy the appropriate Essential Eligibility Criteria (see Appendix III).
- C. INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS
1. Successfully complete an Instructor Development Workshop (IDW) and an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE) at the appropriate level. IDWs and ICEs are taught by Instructor Trainers (ITs) or Instructor Trainer Educators (ITEs). IDW/ICEs may be held as formal classes.  
  
Alternatively, ITs and ITEs may mentor individual Instructor Candidates by co-teaching a minimum of three courses with a single candidate. All three courses must be at the desired level of certification and all aspects of an IDW and ICE must be appropriately covered and documented, using forms provided by the SEI Department. Only one Instructor Candidate may be mentored during any one skills course.
  2. Demonstrate paddling, teaching, interpersonal, safety and group management skills, knowledge of paddlesports, and knowledge of ACA curriculum and procedures, appropriate to the level of certification.
  3. IDW/ICE participation does not guarantee certification. An Instructor Candidate may be certified, or may be asked to complete additional activities, up to and including re-taking the IDW/ICE.
  4. If an Instructor Candidate is not certified at a specific level, they may be "continued." Continued candidates have specific deficiencies that need to be addressed prior to certification. These may include specific paddling, modeling, teaching, leadership or organizational skills or can be due to age requirements.
    - a) Specific deficiencies and suggested corrective actions must be reported, in writing, to the Instructor Candidate and the SEI Department. This report must accompany the certification course report.
    - b) To complete their certification process, continued Instructor Candidates may submit a deficiency list and demonstrate proficiency to an appropriately certified IT/ITE within four years of their ICE. The expiration of a certification earned under this process will be December 31 of the fourth full year from participation in the initial ICE.
  5. ITs or ITEs may award instructors status at differing levels of certification. A candidate continued at a higher level should be awarded a lower level of certification when such certification is earned.

*Example 1: a candidate might be certified as a Level 1: Introduction to Canoeing Instructor and be continued at Level 2: Essentials of Canoe Touring.*

*Example 2: A candidate might be certified as a Level 3: River Kayak Instructor and continued as a Level 4: Whitewater Kayak Instructor.*

6. Successful completion of the certification process must be reported in writing to the SEI Department by the facilitating IT/ITE within thirty days of the Instructor Candidates' demonstration of proficiency.
7. Currently certified ACA Instructors may certify at or below their current certification level in an additional discipline by participating in an appropriate ICE. Prior to participation in the ICE, the Instructor Candidate must obtain permission from the facilitating IT/ITE. The facilitating IT/ITE may grant permission on a case by case basis and may require training in addition to the ICE. The Instructor Candidate must meet all appropriate performance objectives required for certification. Participation in an ICE does not guarantee certification.

*Example: A currently certified Level 3: River Kayak Instructor can obtain Level 3: certification in coastal kayaking by completing a Level 3: Coastal Kayak ICE. To obtain Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayak certification, the same instructor would need to complete a Level 4: Open Water Coastal Kayak IDW and ICE.*

8. Currently certified ACA Instructors may seek an upgrade in their discipline by participating in an ICE or after appropriate review by an ACA IT or ITE in their discipline. Instructors seeking such an upgrade must meet all appropriate performance criteria. ITs or ITEs conducting such reviews must provide documentation using forms provided by the SEI Department.

*Example: A currently certified Level 3: River Kayak Instructor may be upgraded to Level 4: Whitewater Kayak Instructor after appropriate evaluation by a Level 4: Whitewater Kayak IT or ITE.*

9. ACA Instructors are required to maintain appropriate First Aid and age appropriate CPR training from a nationally recognized First Aid and CPR provider throughout the term of their ACA Instructor certification. First Aid and CPR courses must include hands on practice and skills demonstration. If an Instructor's First Aid or age appropriate CPR certification expires during the period of his or her ACA certification, the ACA certification is no longer valid. Instructors whose certifications are not valid are not eligible for ACA insurance coverage. (see Appendix II for comprehensive information)
10. An instructor certified by another agency (e.g., American Red Cross, British Canoe Union, ...) may present their current credentials in lieu of IDW participation, and then receive ACA certification by completing an appropriate ICE. The SEI Department should be contacted to determine certification equivalents. Certification equivalents will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Candidates pursuing this certification pathway should follow the guidelines below.
  - a) The instructor must join the ACA prior to participating in the ICE.
  - b) The instructor must hold current certification from the other agency at the time of the ICE.
  - c) The instructor must gain permission from the facilitating IT or ITE before the ICE. The facilitating IT or ITE is not required to grant such permission.
  - d) The instructor must successfully complete the ICE and meet all appropriate standards for certification.
  - e) SEIC registration is required upon successful completion of an ICE.
  - f) After successfully completing the ICE, the ACA Instructor will hold certification valid through December 31 of the fourth full year following the ICE.

## D. MAINTENANCE OF INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION

Certification is valid through December 31 of the fourth full year following certification. To maintain certification, Instructors must complete the following within each four-year certification period.

1. Maintain annual ACA membership and SEIC registration. If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, back dues must be paid in order to renew/maintain certification.
2. Successfully complete an Instructor Update during the certification period. Three options for updating are available:
  - a) Instructors may complete a formal “Instructor Update” course in the appropriate discipline, at their highest level of certification.
  - b) An Instructor may take or co-teach an IDW, ICE, or ICW in their discipline and at the appropriate level, and the supervising IT or ITE may report it as an Update.
  - c) An Instructor may co-teach a skills course, at their highest level of certification, with a supervising IT/ITE. The instructor then must complete a review of current ACA Policies and Procedures under the direction of the supervising IT/ITE.

*Options b and c require advance permission from the facilitating IT/ITE. IT/ITEs may grant or deny such permission on a case by case basis. Updates should include a review of ACA policies and procedures.*

Updates serve as opportunities to share teaching ideas, to describe changes in ACA policy, and to periodically assess instructor skills. During Updates, Instructors will be expected to demonstrate key skills appropriate to their level of certification, as determined by the SEIC, the SEI Department, and the Instructor Trainer leading the Update. Instructors who are unable to demonstrate skills appropriate to their level of certification may be asked to complete additional corrective training or have their certification challenged (Chapter 5 Section C).

3. Instructors must teach and properly report two classes every four years. At least one class should be at their highest level of certification.

A current ACA instructor who acts as a qualified assistant to a higher level instructor in a skills or assessment class *in their certified discipline*, and craft in the case of introductory certifications, may report their assistance as a qualifying teaching credit *at their own certified level* as long as they provide instruction and their teaching contributions to the class do not go beyond the body of knowledge contained within their own level. The higher-level instructor must decide that the lower-level instructor has the paddling skills necessary to safely provide assistance to the course just as they would for any qualified assistant.

4. Each certification must be maintained by participation in an Update as appropriate for the discipline and level of certification. Instructors certified in multiple disciplines must update each certification.
5. Updates may be conducted individually or in groups less than the IDW/ICE minimums. ITs are strongly encouraged to place Update notification on the ACA website in advance to maximize opportunities for Instructors to meet this maintenance requirement.
6. Exceptions to maintenance requirements may be requested in writing to the SEI Department.
  - a) The SEI Department may authorize a one-year extension if requested in writing prior to the certification expiration. The SEIC Standards Committee may, on a case by case basis, extend certification for an additional time frame. Instructors who require

extensions greater than one year in length should contact the SEI Department as soon as possible. Situations requiring prolonged extensions include overseas military or work deployments, and significant health issues. Prolonged extensions will be granted on a case by case basis and may include a mandatory re-evaluation.

- b) Any certification not updated within the eligible period will become void and may be reinstated as noted in Chapter 5 Section B.

### CHAPTER 3 – ACA INSTRUCTOR TRAINERS

- A. **DUTIES:** Instructor Trainers (ITs) evaluate Instructors and Instructor Candidates to ensure they meet certification criteria. Instructor Trainers conduct Instructor Development Workshops (IDWs), Instructor Certification Examinations (ICEs), Instructor Certification Workshops (ICW: combined IDW & ICE) and Instructor Updates. Instructor Trainers are expected to represent and promote the ACA in a positive manner. Instructor Trainers are certified to teach candidates only in their discipline, at or below the IT’s level of certification, and are subject to all conditions developed by the SEIC and SEI Department.

*Example: All Canoeing ITs must certify in both solo and tandem (bow & stern).*

The Instructor Trainer of record for a certification workshop is responsible to report to the ACA National Office the name, current mailing address, email address, and date of birth of each Instructor Candidate.

- B. **SELECTION CRITERIA:**

- 1. Instructor Trainer Candidates shall be at least 21 years of age
- 2. Instructor Trainer candidates must:
  - a) Hold current ACA membership and SEIC registration
  - b) Be an active ACA Instructor in the appropriate discipline for at least two years
  - c) Have taught and properly reported at least two skills courses at their desired level of Instructor Trainer certification within the past four years.
- 3. Instructor Trainers should have advanced paddling and teaching skills relative to their level of certification and also should possess excellent overall knowledge of paddlesports.

- C. **INSTRUCTOR TRAINER CERTIFICATION PROCESS:**

- 1. Submit the Instructor Trainer Candidate (ITC) Registration Form to the SEI Department
- 2. Receive written confirmation from the SEI Department that you are eligible to begin the Instructor Trainer process
- 3. Complete the Instructor Trainer Candidate online course prior to conducting your first co-teach of an IDW/ICE or ICW
- 4. Participate in an Instructor Trainer Development Workshop (ITDW) or co-teach an IDW and ICE with either an IT or an ITE. An ITDW is required for newly developed disciplines. Only one IT Candidate can receive Co-Teach credit for each IDW/ICE.
- 5. The Instructor Trainer Candidate must actively contribute to the following CMS course reporting processes for their co-teach and receive confirmation from the SEI Department that they are eligible to proceed prior to their lead-teach:
  - a) IDW/ICE or ICW Course Report and Roster
  - b) Evaluations of the Instructor Trainer Candidate completed by the Instructor Candidates

- c) Evaluations of each Instructor Candidate reviewed and signed by the Instructor Trainer Candidate
  - d) Evaluation of the Instructor Trainer Candidate completed by the lead Instructor Trainer or Instructor Trainer Educator
6. Prior to leading an IDW/ICE, the IT Candidate and the supervising ITE will both confirm with the SEI Department the IT Candidate's eligibility for certification.
  7. After co-teaching an IDW/ICE or completing an ITDW, IT Candidates must satisfactorily lead at least one IDW and ICE, with assistance and direct oversight by an Instructor Trainer Educator (ITE). The IT Candidate shall prepare and submit the IDW/ICE outline, ICW Report Form, and Course Evaluations to the SEI Department. The final leading of an IDW and ICE may be repeated as needed for successful completion; IT candidates cannot be continued. Only one IT Candidate can receive Lead Teach credit for each IDW/ICE.
  8. When the IT Candidate has led an IDW and ICE under the direct supervision of their mentoring ITE, the IT Candidate shall submit an official IT Application Form, within 30 days of the ICE completion, to the SEI Department. In addition to a letter from the mentoring ITE, two additional ACA Instructor or Instructor Trainer nominating letters are required. At least one of the two additional letters must be from an Instructor or IT in the IT Candidate's discipline.
  9. The IT Candidate's application will be reviewed by the SEI Department, with final certification approved by majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair.
  10. The two-year Instructor experience requirement may, in exceptional situations, be waived at the discretion of the SEIC Standards Committee. Exceptions must be requested in writing, with supporting documentation as requested by the SEIC Standards Committee or SEI Department, before completing step 3.C.1 above.
  11. ITs upgrading within a discipline or ITs attempting to certify in a subsequent discipline must lead an IDW/ICE at the new level or in the new discipline under the direct supervision of a mentoring ITE. ITs are eligible to conduct this lead teach provided they are already an appropriately certified ACA Instructor at the level of the lead teach, and have taught and properly reported at least two skills courses at the desired level in lieu of the two year minimum requirement (Chapter 3.B.2.a.).
  12. ITs pursuing a new discipline may complete the IT certification process as above, but may apply for a waiver to the SEIC Standards Committee to operate provisionally to allow discipline development.
  13. IT's upgrading within a discipline or certifying in a subsequent discipline, must submit a new IT Application Form to the SEI Department for the new level or discipline.
  14. ACA Instructor Trainers are required to maintain appropriate First Aid and age appropriate CPR training from a nationally recognized First Aid and CPR provider throughout the term of their ACA Instructor Trainer certification. First Aid and CPR courses must include hands on practice and skills demonstration. If an Instructor Trainer's First Aid or age appropriate CPR certification expires during the period of his or her ACA certification, the ACA certification is no longer valid. Instructor Trainers whose certifications are not valid are not eligible for ACA insurance coverage. (see Appendix II for comprehensive information)



*The SEIC Standards Committee may modify any of the above requirements as needed for discipline development.*

#### D. MAINTENANCE OF INSTRUCTOR TRAINER CERTIFICATION

Certification is valid through December 31 of the fourth full year following certification. To maintain certification, Instructor Trainers must complete the following within each four-year certification period.

1. Maintain annual ACA membership and SEIC registration. If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, back dues must be paid in order to renew/maintain certification.
2. Teach and properly report at least four courses during each certification period. Courses must include at least one IDW/ICE at the highest level of certification, one Update, and one skills or assessment course. Course reports and evaluations for these courses must be forwarded to the SEI Department.
3. Participate in an Instructor Trainer Update. Alternatively, ITs may co-teach an IDW and ICE with another IT or ITE, or assist an ITE teaching an ITDW. ITs may not receive update credit for co-teaching with the same IT or ITE in two consecutive certification periods.

*Multi-discipline Instructor Trainer Updates may be used to meet the maintenance requirements for multi-discipline Instructor Trainers in the disciplines represented. However, Instructor Trainers must meet all appropriate performance criteria, as established by the SEIC and SEI Department, for each of their certifications.*

4. Exceptions to maintenance requirements may be requested in writing to the SEI Department.
  - a) The SEI Department may authorize a one-year extension if requested in writing prior to the certification expiration. The SEIC Standards Committee may, on a case by case basis, extend certification for an additional time frame. Instructor Trainers who require extensions greater than one year in length should contact the SEI Department as soon as possible. Situations requiring prolonged extensions include overseas military or work deployments and significant health issues.
  - b) Any IT certification not updated within the eligible period will become void but may, after evaluation on a case by case basis, be reinstated by approval of the SEIC Standards Committee.

#### CHAPTER 4 - ACA INSTRUCTOR TRAINER EDUCATORS

##### A. DUTIES:

Instructor Trainer Educators (ITE) are Instructor Trainers designated by the SEIC Standards Committee to prepare and evaluate Instructor Trainer Candidates. Only ITEs may mentor IT candidates or teach IT Development Workshops and IT Updates. ITEs may lead IT workshops and mentor IT candidates only in the disciplines in which they are certified as ITEs. An ITE should demonstrate excellent teaching, mentoring and paddling skills, and should serve as a good will ambassador for the ACA.



## B. SELECTION CRITERIA:

Instructor Trainer Educator candidates will demonstrate paddling and teaching skills that are significantly advanced relative to their level of certification. They also will demonstrate excellent knowledge of paddlesports. They will, in addition, meet the criteria listed below.

1. ITE candidates must serve as an Instructor Trainer in good standing in the discipline of application for at least two years prior to application. They also must have conducted and reported at least two IDW/ICEs at their highest level of certification, one Instructor Update, and one skills or assessment course. Exceptions may be granted upon majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair.
2. ITE Candidates must have attended an ACA instructional clinic conducted by an IT or ITE in another discipline or Division.
3. Applicants should demonstrate strong skills in at least one additional ACA discipline, or in another recreation or outdoor education field.

## C. ITE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. An ITE candidate must apply to the SEIC Standards Committee by submitting the ITE Application Form to the SEI Department, a paddling resume, and three letters of recommendation. At least one letter should be from an ITE in the appropriate discipline. At least two letters must be from current ACA Instructors / Instructor Trainers / Instructor Trainer Educators in the appropriate discipline.
2. Candidates shall submit videotape modeling of paddling and teaching skills, or arrange an in-person review with a designated representative of the discipline committee, as determined by both the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair.
3. The ITE Candidate must submit course reports, outlines and evaluations from at least four separate workshops. One of these must be an Instructor Update, two must be from IDW/ICEs at the ITE Candidate's requested level of ITE certification, and one must be from a skills or assessment course.
4. ITE candidates will be approved by majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair. Exceptions to the above criteria may be granted, on a case by case basis, upon majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and appropriate discipline chair. A list of new ITEs will be announced to the SEIC at national meetings.
5. ACA Instructor Trainer Educators are required to maintain appropriate First Aid and age appropriate CPR training from a nationally recognized First Aid and CPR provider throughout the term of their ACA Instructor Trainer Educator certification. First Aid and CPR courses must include hands on practice and skills demonstration. If an Instructor Trainer Educator's First Aid or age appropriate CPR certification expires during the period of his or her ACA certification, the ACA certification is no longer valid. Instructor Trainer Educators whose certifications are not valid are not eligible for ACA insurance coverage. (see Appendix II for comprehensive information)

## D. MAINTENANCE OF INSTRUCTOR TRAINER EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

Certification is valid through December 31 of the fourth full year following designation as an ITE. To maintain certification, Instructor Trainer Educators must complete the following within each four-year certification period.

1. Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration. If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, back dues must be paid in order to renew/maintain certification.
2. Complete the required ITE renewal documents available on the ACA website. ITE renewal requests must be received prior to the final SEIC meeting of the calendar year of an ITE's expiration.
3. Teach at least six properly reported courses during the four-year certification period. One of these must be a skills or assessment course, one must be an Instructor Update and one must be an IDW/ICE at the highest level of certification. Evaluations from these courses must be submitted for review by the SEI Department and the SEIC Standards Committee. In addition, the ITE must teach at least one course with another IT or ITE in their discipline. Finally, ITEs are expected to demonstrate significant service to paddlesport and the ACA. Exceptions to these requirements may be made on a case by case basis upon majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair.
4. ITE renewal will be approved by majority vote of the SEIC Standards Committee and the appropriate discipline chair.

## CHAPTER 5 - CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE, REINSTATEMENT AND CHALLENGES

### A. MAINTENANCE OF ACA CERTIFICATION: Certification is valid through 31 December of the fourth full year following certification. To maintain certification, Instructors, ITs and ITEs must complete the items listed below.

1. Maintain annual ACA membership and SEIC registration. If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, back dues must be paid in order to renew/maintain certification.
2. Successfully complete an appropriate Update (as described in previous sections)
3. Teach an appropriate minimum number of courses (as described in previous sections)
4. Multi-discipline Instructors, ITs and ITEs must meet the maintenance requirements for each of the respective disciplines.
5. Exceptions to maintenance requirements may be requested to the SEIC in writing.

*The SEI Department may authorize a one-year extension if requested in writing prior to the certification expiration. The SEIC Standards Committee may grant an additional extension in unusual circumstances (e.g., prolonged medical problems, overseas military deployment), or as needed for discipline development.*

### B. REINSTATEMENT OF ACA CERTIFICATION; To reinstate lapsed Instructor certification, the applicant shall:

1. Ensure ACA membership and SEIC registration are current. If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, back dues must be paid in order to renew/maintain certification.
2. Satisfactorily complete an appropriate ICE. Candidates must meet all performance criteria for their desired level of certification. Mere participation in an ICE does not guarantee reinstatement of certification. In many cases, candidates may be better served by completing both an IDW and ICE.

3. If certification is out-of date for more than 18 months, a former Instructor MUST successfully complete a full Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE).
4. Reinstatement of lapsed IT and ITE certification will be evaluated by the SEI Department and SEIC Standards Committee on a case by case basis.

C. ACA CERTIFICATION CHALLENGE PROCEDURES:

ACA Certification may be reviewed any time an Instructor, IT or ITE is challenged for not meeting appropriate ACA and SEIC standards. Challenges may be initiated by workshop students, Instructors, ITs, ITEs, or the ACA National Office. The SEI Department will coordinate investigations related to challenges. In addition, the ACA National Office may initiate investigations when they discover evidence of inappropriate conduct.

1. When questions arise regarding an Instructor's/Instructor Trainer's/Instructor Trainer Educator's skills or knowledge, a personal conference between challenger and challengee should be initiated. During this meeting, every effort should be made to address and correct any perceived deficiencies. This conference may be face to face, via telephone, via email or written correspondence.
2. If the perceived deficiencies can be satisfactorily addressed at the time of the conference, no further action or documentation is needed.
3. If the deficiencies cannot be satisfactorily addressed at the time of the conference, the challenger and challengee may develop a mutually agreeable plan to address them. This plan must be submitted in writing to the SEI Department within 30 days. The plan may not involve arbitrary revocation of certification.
4. If the deficiencies cannot be satisfactorily addressed at the time of the conference, and the challenger and challengee cannot develop a mutually agreeable remediation plan, the challenger may notify the SEI Department and / or institute a formal challenge, as described below. The ACA National Office may independently initiate a formal challenge.
5. To initiate a formal challenge, the challenger must submit a signed letter or email to the ACA National Office, describing the alleged deficiencies in detail. Details must include a description of when and where the deficiency was observed, a list of other witnesses, and an exact description of the alleged deficiency. Statements such as "their strokes were bad" or "their teaching was ineffective" do not provide adequate detail. Instead, specific details regarding the deficiency must be provided. Supporting evidence such as video, course outlines, and handouts should be included.

The ACA National Office may independently initiate investigations or formal challenges upon discovery of violations of ACA or SEIC policies. However, before any disciplinary action can be taken against an Instructor/Instructor Trainer/Instructor Trainer Educator, a challenge must be filed and the challengee given an appropriate opportunity to rebut the challenge.

6. Within 10 days of receipt, the SEI Department will acknowledge the complaint by written or email notice to the challenger, the challengee and the SEIC Standards Committee. The acknowledgement will list observed deficiencies and any corrections suggested by the challenger.
7. The SEIC Standards Committee, along with the appropriate ACA National Office staff, will investigate the challenge, and notify all parties involved if disciplinary action is

considered. The SEIC Standards Committee may restrict the challengee's certification during the investigation.

8. The person challenged may rebut to the SEIC Standards Committee by letter, videotape, or in person at regular meetings. Intent to rebut must be emailed or postmarked within 30 days of challenge notice. All ACA Instructors/Instructor Trainers/Instructor Trainer Educators are expected to cooperate with investigations. Both challengee and challenger may be requested to submit video documentation of their paddling and teaching or may be reviewed in-person by a designee of the SEIC Standards Committee. Failure to cooperate with a standards investigation is grounds for summary revocation of certification. Investigations will be completed in a timely fashion. However, due to the volunteer nature of the ACA and the SEIC Standards Committee, investigations may take a year or longer to complete.
9. After investigating all evidence, the SEIC Standards Committee will issue a written decision in a timely fashion. The SEIC Standards Committee may:
  - a) Find the complaint without merit
  - b) Find the complaint valid, and issue a warning to the challengee noting suggested remedy
  - c) Place the challengee on probation, with a mandated corrective plan. The challengee is responsible for correcting the deficiency and must be successfully reassessed by an appropriately certified IT or ITE, or by a designee of the SEIC Standards Committee. The evaluator will be responsible for reporting the evaluation to the SEI Department.
    - ii) If the challengee successfully addresses the situation during the probationary period, the certification will be reinstated with the existing expiration.
    - iii) If the challengee does not remedy the situation within one year of being placed on probation, their certification will be terminated. Recertification will require successful completion of an appropriate IDW/ICE.
  - d) Summarily terminate the challengee's certification. Recertification will require successful completion of an appropriate IDW and ICE.

- D. **VOLUNTARY DOWNGRADES:** An Instructor, IT or ITE may voluntarily downgrade one or more levels (e.g. L4 to L3) and/or grades (e.g. ITE to IT) during or at the end of a four-year certification period. The applicant must:
- a) Submit the request to the SEI Department in writing. Email is acceptable.
  - b) Provide effective date(s) that cannot be later than the applicable certification(s).
  - c) The SEI Department will implement the downgrade(s) with the requested effective date(s) and adjust dues, as needed, to comply with current policy.

- E. **VOLUNTARY RETIREMENTS:** An Instructor, IT or ITE may voluntarily retire, that is give up one or more certifications, during a four-year certification while remaining an ACA member.
- a) Submit the request to the SEI Department in writing. Email is acceptable.
  - b) Provide effective date(s) that cannot be later than the applicable certification(s).
  - c) The SEI Department will implement the retirement(s) with the requested effective date(s) and adjust dues, as needed, to comply with current policy.

## CHAPTER 6 - ACA COURSES and WORKSHOPS

### A. ACA SKILLS and ASSESSMENT COURSES

1. ACA Skills and Assessment Courses are taught by ACA Instructors holding appropriate certification. ACA Course Outlines are available from the SEI Department and are available for download from the ACA website. Participants in skills courses may receive a participation card. However, skills courses do not provide documentation that a particular skill was mastered. Assessment courses include a formal assessment designed

to demonstrate mastery of a defined skill set. Upon successful completion of an assessment course, participants will receive an assessment certificate from the ACA National Office.

2. Instructors shall notify the ACA National Office of courses they have taught by completing official ACA Course Report Forms within thirty days of the course. Courses insured by the ACA must be reported within the timeframe established by SEI Insurance Guidelines.
3. Instructors are encouraged to use safety and instructional materials approved by the SEIC and available from the ACA National Office. Other resources may be used if the material is technically up-to-date.
4. Instructor to student ratios and maximum course sizes shall not exceed those established by the SEIC and the SEI Department. Ratios are provided on course outlines.

#### B. INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS and CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Instructor Development Workshops (IDWs) are intended to develop the skills and knowledge of Instructor Candidates. The IDW is a prerequisite to an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE) for new ACA Instructor Candidates. ITs may issue participation cards or award appropriate skills assessments to all IDW participants.

Instructor Certification Exams (ICEs) test the knowledge, skills and proficiency of Instructor Candidates. Upon successful completion of an ICE, candidates are awarded Instructor certification.

*Instructor Trainers may offer stand-alone IDWs or ICEs, and also may offer certification workshops where IDWs and ICEs are combined. In addition, ITs may mentor individual instructor candidates while teaching skills courses.*

1. The SEIC has established minimum IDW and ICE hours to provide adequate workshop content coverage, to provide appropriate evaluative feedback, to maintain safety, and to allow ample time for numerous candidate practice teaching opportunities. These requirements appear on official Course Outlines, and include on and off water instruction, but not logistical, management, or travel-time.
2. Each IDW or ICE shall have a minimum of four candidates enrolled, to allow practice in class management and to provide adequate exchange of teaching ideas. In IDW, ICE or ICWs with student: instructor ratios lower than 5:1, each IDW, ICE or ICW shall have a minimum of two candidates and a maximum up to the number allowed by student: instructor ratios, as stated on the instructor criteria documents. The SEI Department may authorize an exception to allow an IDW or ICE to occur with a course minimum of fewer than four participants.
3. Official Instructor Certification Report Forms, available from the ACA National Office and online, shall be sent to the SEI Department within 30 days of the course completion.
4. ITs may mentor Instructor Candidates while teaching skills courses. Instructor Candidates who pursue certification via mentoring must meet all instructor performance objectives established by the SEIC. In addition, Instructor Candidates must meet all prerequisites for certification, and must co-teach at least three skills courses with the mentoring IT at the desired level of certification.

5. Multi-discipline IDWs, ICEs or Updates must have an appropriately certified IT for each represented discipline. ITs certified in multiple disciplines may lead multi-discipline IDWs, ICEs and Updates, but all appropriate performance goals must be met for each represented discipline.
6. Requests for exceptions to IDW or ICE standards must be made prior to the start of the affected course. Requests for exceptions must be made by writing the SEIC Standards Committee, through the SEI Department.
7. ITs shall forward course evaluations to the SEI Department. Course evaluations are required for all IDWs, ICEs and Updates.
8. ITs may issue temporary certification cards to Instructor Candidates who successfully complete an ICE, provided the new Instructor's ACA membership and SEIC registration is current. Temporary certification cards will be issued in accordance with procedures developed by the SEI Department.
9. All Instructor Candidates must have the ACA Instruction Manual and any additional required texts or materials as listed on the ACA website.

#### C. INSTRUCTOR UPDATES [IU]

Instructor Updates are conducted to provide instructors with a forum for continuing education, with updates on ACA policies and procedures, and to ensure ongoing maintenance of ACA standards. Instructor Updates are not intended to be ICEs. However, during an Update, Instructors should be prepared to appropriately demonstrate or teach any skill they are certified to teach.

1. Updates may be coordinated by the SEIC, Divisional Instruction Facilitators, Discipline Committees, the ACA National Office or individual ITs. Updates must include an appropriately certified IT for each discipline represented.
2. Updates must be reported to the SEI Department within 30 days of completion.
3. Updates may be conducted individually or in groups less than the IDW/ICE minimums. Updates may be offered in conjunction with skills courses if ITs include an additional module that reviews ACA policies and procedures. ITs are strongly encouraged to place Update notification on the ACA, Divisional and Club websites to maximize opportunities for Instructor continuing education.

#### D. INSTRUCTOR TRAINER UPDATES [ITU]

Instructor Trainer Updates are conducted to provide Instructor Trainers with a forum for continuing education, with updates on ACA policies and procedures, and to ensure ongoing maintenance of ACA standards.

1. IT Updates may be coordinated by the SEIC, Divisional Instruction Facilitators, Discipline Committees, the ACA National Office or individual ITEs. IT Updates must include an appropriately certified ITE from each represented discipline.
2. IT Updates must be reported to the SEI Department within 30 days of completion.

#### E. INSTRUCTOR TRAINER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS [ITDW]

ITDWs certify new Instructor Trainers. ITDWs bypass the standard mentoring process used to certify new ITs, and most often are conducted in new or small disciplines.

ITDWs shall be coordinated by the SEIC and SEI Department, as needed for discipline development. Individual ITEs may not independently schedule ITDWs without prior approval from the SEI Department and the SEIC Standards Committee. ITDWs must include an appropriately certified ITE for each discipline represented.

#### F. INSTRUCTOR ENDORSEMENTS

Instructor Endorsements allow certified instructors who have completed the specific Endorsement to offer additional skills courses to the public and may use ACA insurance to do so. Examples include but are not limited to, Kayak or Canoe Rolling, Canoe Camping, Kayak Traditional Skills, Kayak Fishing, SUP Yoga, etc. Instructor Endorsements are offered to certified instructors by appropriately credentialed ITs or ITEs who have met at least one of the following requirements:

1. Have successfully completed the relevant Endorsement program provided by another qualified IT or ITE who holds the endorsement being offered, or
2. Are an IT or ITE in a Discipline and Level where the Endorsement material is a standard component of the ICW process (Example: Kayak Rolling is a standard requirement for all River Kayak and Coastal Kayak Instructors at L4 and L5, therefore all L4 and L5 Instructors automatically hold the Kayak Rolling Endorsement and can offer the Kayak Rolling (skills) course. Likewise, all River Kayak and Coastal Kayak L4 and L5 ITs and ITEs are automatically considered Endorsers for Kayak Rolling and can endorse Instructors without further training.)
3. An IT or ITE pursuing an endorsement that is new or has a relatively small number of ITs or ITEs may apply to the SEIC Standards Committee to operate provisionally, with specified goals and timelines, to allow endorsement program development.

Additionally:

- Endorsement courses must be reported to the SEI Department within 30 days of completion.
- Endorsements generally do not have specific maintenance requirements and remain valid as long as the Instructor Certification to which they are attached remains valid. However, the Adaptive Paddling and Advanced Communications Endorsements do have specific maintenance requirements; see the relevant Endorsement Criteria document for more information.



ADDENDA: Approved Changes to the Policy Manual

<u>Date of Change</u>	<u>Policy Manual Change</u>	<u>Approved By:</u>
March 18, 2009	Complete revision of policy manual	Executive Committee - ACA Board
June 14, 2009	First Aid & CPR Requirement	ACA Board of Directors
June 25, 2009	Inserted Appendix II and related wording	Executive Committee – SEIC
September 16, 2009	Inserted Appendix III and related wording	Executive Committee - ACA Board
October 2, 2011	Addition to First Aid & CPR Requirement	ACA Board of Directors
September 29, 2013	IT Upgrade - Chapter 3.C.7.	ACA Board of Directors
September 11, 2014	Modification to Chapter 6.B.2 and 2.D.3	Executive Committee – SEIC
February 22, 2015	Changes to Chapters 3.B.2.c, 2.D.1, 3.D.1, 4.D.1, 5.A.1 & 5.B.1	ACA Board of Directors
October 22, 2015	Changes to Chapters 3.C, 6.A.4, 6.B.2 & Appendix III EEC	ACA Board of Directors
February 10, 2016	Simplification of Appendix III EEC	ACA Board of Directors
March 1, 2019	Addition to Chapter 6: Section F	Executive Committee – SEIC
October 4, 2019	Acceptance of digital copies of waivers submitted for insured ACA instructional programs – Chapter 1.C	Executive Committee – SEIC ACA Board of Directors
October 4, 2019	Removal of Chapter 2.D.6 regarding use of Endorsements as Instructor Updates Effective January 1, 2020: Endorsements may no longer be used as an instructor update as related to certification maintenance requirements	Executive Committee – SEIC ACA Board of Directors
February 23, 2020	Addition of Chapter 1.F	Executive Committee – SEIC ACA Board of Directors
October 16, 2020	Procedures for voluntary downgrades and certification retirements, only one ITC may claim co-teach IDW/ICE credit	Executive Committee – SEIC ACA Board of Directors

## APPENDIX I

### GLOSSARY of TERMS

- ACA American Canoe Association, Inc
- IC Instructor Candidate
- ICE Instructor Certification Examination: required for certification - may not be waived
- ICW Instructor Certification Workshop (both IDW & ICE)
- IDW Instructor Development Workshop: mandated pre-requisite to ICE participation
- IT Instructor Trainer: person authorized by the ACA to certify an Instructor within a discipline at a specific level
- ITC Instructor Trainer Candidate: person who desires to become an IT, requires direct supervision by an ITE.
- ITE Instructor Trainer Educator: a person authorized by the ACA to mentor IT Candidates; they are the highest level of ACA certification and are good will ambassadors of the ACA and paddlesports
- ITDW Instructor Trainer Development Workshop
- SEI Safety Education and Instruction Department of the ACA National Office
- SEIC Safety Education and Instruction Council: a compilation of various ACA committees and individuals, the SEIC is advisory to the ACA Board of Directors, the SEIC Chair has a seat on the ACA Board of Directors.
- U/ IU / ITU Update: either Instructor or Trainer Level; required continuing education
- CMS Course Management System: Required online tool for the registering and reporting of ACA courses as well as submission of additional related administrative documentation

## APPENDIX II

### FIRST AID and CPR REQUIREMENTS

1. ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators are required to maintain appropriate First Aid and age appropriate CPR training from a nationally recognized First Aid and CPR provider throughout the term of their ACA certification. First Aid and CPR courses must include hands on practice and skills demonstration.
2. If an Instructor, Instructor Trainer, or Instructor Trainer Educator's First Aid or age appropriate CPR certification expires during the period of his or her ACA certification, the ACA certification is no longer valid. Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators whose certifications are not valid are not eligible for ACA insurance coverage
3. Failure to maintain these certifications could lead to a liability claim if a participant is injured in an ACA course. The ACA and its insurance company reserve the right to deny insurance coverage to Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators who have not properly maintained their First Aid and CPR certifications.
4. Proof of current First Aid and CPR certification must accompany each insurance request. Copies of current First Aid and CPR documentation will be accepted via fax, scan/email, or paper copy along with the appropriate insurance request paperwork.
5. Insurance requests will not be processed or approved if an ACA Instructor, Instructor Trainer, or Instructor Trainer Educator's First Aid or CPR certification expires before the completion date of the proposed course.
6. The term "appropriate level" means that the individual Instructor, Instructor Trainer, or Instructor Trainer Educator will have a level of First Aid and age appropriate CPR training that is prudent for the venue where they are teaching. For example:

*If you only teach adults in a swimming pool with lifeguard supervision, then some type of basic First Aid training and adult CPR might be appropriate.*

*If you teach in a river or coastal environment several hours from definitive medical care, then some level of wilderness First Aid training and more extensive CPR training might be prudent.*

7. At a minimum, all ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators must have American Red Cross Standard First Aid and age appropriate CPR, or its equivalent from another nationally recognized provider.
8. When applicable, ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators should verify what is an acceptable First Aid and CPR certification for the area where they are teaching. For example:

*Certain state or federal entities might require a certain level of First Aid and CPR training in order to legally operate within the properties they manage.*

9. ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators are encouraged to become certified in advanced levels of First Aid and CPR training.
10. If First Aid or CPR certification lapses, Instructor, Instructor Trainer, and Instructor Trainer Educator certification can be reinstated by renewing the First Aid and CPR certification.

11. To determine if First Aid and CPR courses or certifications meet the standards requirements, contact the ACA's SEI Department.
12. Implementation Plan:
  - a. Starting 1/1/2010 all newly certified ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators must have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR.
  - b. Starting 1/1/2011, all ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators certified prior to 1/1/2010 must have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR.
13. At the October 2, 2011, SEIC and ACA Board of Director's meeting, the phrase "First Aid and CPR courses must include hands on practice and skills demonstration." was approved to be added appropriately throughout the SEIC Policy Manual.

## APPENDIX III

### ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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. Re-mount or re-enter 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.*