

Spring, 2021

Roadmap To Becoming An Instructor

OVERVIEW

While there is some flexibility built into the system, there is a basic flow which is outlined in this document. Consult with your Mentor, Instructor of Record or Regional Program Administrator if you have any questions or concerns.

Basic Flow²

1. Complete the Instructor Development course
2. Get a Mentor
 - a. Meet with your mentor
 - i. *Discuss expectations, goals, process, game plan, responsibilities, timeline, etc.*
 - ii. *Review paperwork, especially Instructor Application and Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form*
 - iii. *Review Guide to Mentoring New Instructors*
3. Observe other instructors with your mentor, and debrief
4. Prepare and review lesson plan(s) with mentor
5. Teach lesson(s)
6. Final IT evaluation & approval

STEP ONE: INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT COURSE

Generally, the first step in becoming an instructor in any NSP discipline is to complete the Instructor Development course. This is currently offered in two formats. The traditional format is a one-day workshop consisting of academic presentations, discussions and practice presentations.

The other option is a hybrid approach based upon the online course available through the NSP.org website. This course consists of eleven chapters that the prospective instructor candidate may take at his/her own pace. Upon completion of this portion of the course, the candidate will be able to print a certificate of completion. This is not the completion of the Instructor Development Course, only the online portion of the course.

The next step is to contact the Instructor Development Instructor of Record and arrange a time and place for a short in-person session. This will be an opportunity to briefly review the key elements of the online course, review some administrative procedures (e.g., how to register, cancel and complete a course, what is required to maintain your instructor status, etc.). You will also present a short lesson, and then discuss “what’s next” to complete your journey to becoming an NSP instructor. Your Instructor Development IOR or your mentor, if one has been assigned at this time, will be able to discuss this with you in more detail.

1. STEP TWO: YOUR MENTOR

You will be working closely with your mentor throughout this process, so make sure the two of you can work well together. This not only means you have compatible personalities but also that your schedules and communication styles are compatible as well.

Some of the things the two of you will work on together include, but are not limited to:

- Guide to Mentoring New Instructors
- General administrative procedures, such as:
 - How to create and register courses
 - How to administer courses
 - How to close and cancel courses
- Paperwork—everyone loves paperwork, right?
 - Review the Instructor Application and begin completing it. Discuss how the rest of the document will be completed. This is your responsibility, but you’ll likely need some guidance from your mentor.
 - Review the Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form and begin completing this as well. Discuss the flow of the process as it appears in this document. Understand who signs what and when. You should be proactive in obtaining these signatures as you progress through the process.
 - Make a folder with all of your instructor paperwork and bring this with you to each class you teach. Those who evaluate you may want to review this. Your mentor will want to review it, and it is much easier to get the required signatures when the evaluator/mentor/IT is there, instead of trying to chase them down later.
 - ***You should keep copies of all paperwork. So should your mentor!***
 - Course Evaluation Form
 - QA IT Course Evaluation Form

- Event/Training Release Form
- NSP.org instructor resources
 - PowerPoint presentations
 - Many OET resources can be found on NSP.org and PatrollerSchool.org
 - Sample Lesson Plans
- Lesson planning and contingency planning (e.g., “Plan B” should things not go according to your plan)
- Your plan of action, such as:
 - Realistic goals—how much time and energy can you (and your mentor) devote to becoming an instructor; are your schedules compatible?
 - How will you work together? Best modes of communication (phone, email, text, face-to-face, etc.)
 - What kind of learner are you? How can you, as a team, best capitalize upon this?
 - Your “game plan” to becoming an instructor. Keep in mind this is a dynamic process and will likely change as you progress.
 - What are your responsibilities as an instructor candidate?
 - What are your mentor’s responsibilities?
 - What is your timeline? You will likely have to work with your course IOR as he/she will need to schedule you to teach specific lessons.

As you can see, there is a lot to discuss. You may want to do this in “bite-size” pieces. Maybe split it up into a couple meetings.

STEP THREE: OBSERVE OTHER INSTRUCTORS

Before getting too invested in creating your own lesson plans, observe a lesson or two and debrief them with your mentor. What did they do well? Are there any techniques that were particularly effective with this class that you could emulate? What techniques didn't seem to be very effective? What learning styles did you observe among the students? What methods could you employ to engage this class? What challenges do you see?

Your insights will be valuable as you create your lesson plans.

STEP FOUR: PREPARE AND REVIEW LESSON PLAN(S) WITH YOUR MENTOR

Now that you have a good idea about the students you will be teaching and have given some thought as to what teaching styles might be most effective for this class, you can begin to develop your lesson plan. Use the tools and techniques you learned in your

Instructor Development course, such as the “Six-Pack”. Once you have developed your lesson plan, think about what could possibly go wrong and consider ways to deal with them. Some of your contingency plans might address things such as: audio video equipment failures, wi-fi/internet problems, teaching assistants showing up late or not at all, uncooperative weather, room changes, other events taking place where you had planned to teach, etc. Having thought through all these scenarios will reduce your stress levels dramatically, even if nothing goes wrong.

If you have questions along the way or get “stumped”, confer with your mentor. That’s what he/she is there for. They can help you work through it.

Once you have developed your lesson plan, let your mentor review it. It never hurts to have a second set of eyes on it. Once the two of you are satisfied with the lesson plan, practice it a few times to get comfortable with the material and your delivery. If possible, run through it with family, friends or patrollers in the roles of your students.

STEP FIVE: TEACH LESSON(S)

Now it’s time to teach your class. Make sure your mentor is there to observe. If other Instructors or Instructor Trainers are available, ask if they would be willing to observe your lesson and give you feedback.

It is best to take a few minutes to debrief as soon after your lesson as possible. Tell your mentor how you felt it went. What did you think went particularly well? Did anything take you by surprise or catch you off guard? Were there any issues that you felt you were unable to handle or could have handled better? What would you do differently if you were to do it again? Keep in mind that you can elicit input from your mentor, other instructors, even students in the class—anyone who might be able to provide you with valuable insight. These debriefs are intended to be two-way discussions. Take the leadership here.

After considering all the input from you and those who observed you, talk to your mentor about an appropriate next step. In many cases, this might be to teach another class and incorporate any lessons learned from this debrief. You may need to teach multiple classes to give yourself the opportunity to hone your teaching skills.

STEP SIX: FINAL IT EVALUATION

Once you and your mentor feel you are ready, have your mentor coordinate a time with the Instructor Trainer of Record (ITOR) to observe and evaluate your performance as an instructor. If the ITOR is not able to do this, your mentor can request that an IT from another ski patrol do the evaluation.

This is a particularly important event for you, so make sure you work closely with your mentor. Review your past evaluations and make sure that you build upon your strengths and address any areas for improvement that have been noted in prior evaluations.

The IT, your mentor, and you will debrief the lesson, just like you have done in the past. The only difference here is that the IT will either recommend that you become an instructor, or he/she will make some suggestions for improvement and ask for an opportunity to evaluate you on another lesson.

If all went well, and the IT is recommending that you become an instructor, it's time to collect some more signatures and review your application paperwork—your Instructor Application and Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form.

Important!

Both the Instructor Candidate and their Mentor should keep copies of all important paperwork. This would include any observation/evaluation forms, as well as updated Instructor Application and Instructor Trainee Mentoring Completion Form.

Send the original (or email a scanned image) to the regional program administrator or advisor who will review everything and forward it on to the Division Supervisor who will take one last look at everything and instruct National to update your records.

CONCLUSION

We hope this guide is helpful. Keep in mind that this may become outdated as systems and procedures change. If you find inaccuracies, omissions, unclear statements or any other areas of improvement in this document, please notify the author (see below) or person who gave you this document so that we may keep this relevant and current.

Thank you.

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APPENDIX

Please read and become familiar with the following excerpts from the NSP Policies and Procedures, 2016 Edition. Keep in mind that the following may change.

4.4 Instructor Development, Certification and Recertification

4.4.1 Instructor Development Course

4.4.1.1 The ID course covers the various areas of instruction and how instructors can apply them to create a positive learning experience for students, and helps build a basic foundation of educational knowledge for use when planning and delivering lessons.

4.4.1.2 The essentials for being an effective instructor are taught in lessons (chapters) of the *Instructor Development Manual – Training the Adult Learner*, including the "six pack" lesson. This is the quality management (QM) standard for how NSP programs are to be taught.

4.4.2 Instructor Mentoring

4.4.2.1 In this phase, the potential instructor (mentee) develops lessons and practices teaching at regular courses under the observation and guidance of a credentialed instructor (mentor). Mentoring focuses on the practical application of teaching and assessment-or-learning skills, plus the NSP or division-specific administrative policies for a specific program.

4.4.2.2 *Guide to Mentoring New Instructors* is the manual that describes the mentoring process. It is found under "Instructor Development" on the NSP website.

4.4.3 Initial Certification

4.4.3.1 Instructor certification is based on competence, not on a certain time period or number of lessons taught. A certified instructor is defined as being capable of carrying out all program event functions, including those of an IOR.

4.4.3.2 When the mentor determines that the mentee is ready, the mentor arranges for a formal instructor evaluation by the IT having oversight at a course.

4.4.3.3 If the mentee's performance evaluation indicates readiness for certification, he or she is certified according to the national and divisional program processes and guidelines specified in each program's instructor manual.

4.4.4 Continuing Education

4.4.4.1 All instructors must participate in at least one instructor continuing education (CE) activity during each certification period. Suitable CE events are specified within each national program standard.

4.4.4.2 Participation in a suitable CE event is documented by submitting a course completion record, in the case of NSP registered events, or by submitting a participant roster and/or certificate in the case of non-NSP events, to the region administrator or division supervisor.

4.4.5 Formal evaluation of teaching performance

4.4.5.1 All instructors must have at least one lesson formally evaluated at an educational event delivered by their program within their three-year certification cycle. This is documented by the Instructor Performance Evaluation Report.

4.4.6 Instructor recertification and Quality Standards Enforcement

4.4.6.1 NSP instructor certification is valid for a period of three years, at which time it expires. Like initial instructor certification, recertification is based on evidence of observed competence, not incumbency. Specific recertification requirements may be found in the program's instructor's manual.

4.4.6.2 Determination of instructor competence is based on the level of teaching activity, formal evaluation, and participation at qualified instructor CE, all of which contribute to the continuous development of instructional quality.

4.4.6.3 Qualification for instructor recertification is audited by the division program supervisor, using division instructor activity reports, formal course evaluations, instructor performance evaluation reports, NSP education activity feedback reports, CE attendance records, and other input supplied by the region program administrator and ITs.

4.4.6.4 Instructors who do not meet minimum teaching requirements are not eligible for recertification. If an instructor is not recertified for this reason alone, he or she may recertify by reentering the mentoring process and/or teaching at a qualifying education event and receiving a satisfactory instructor performance evaluation.

4.4.6.5 Instructors who do not meet minimum continuing education requirements are not eligible for recertification. To help avoid this situation, division program supervisors must ensure that sufficient qualifying CE opportunities are available. If an instructor is not recertified for this reason alone, he or she may recertify by participating in a qualified CE event within one year.

4.4.6.6 If any performance deficiencies are noted by the evaluating IT at an event, that IT will provide corrective feedback. If the deficiency is in an area of event

management that the IT is not in a position to notice (e.g. course completion paperwork), the program's division supervisor must provide the corrective feedback. If noted deficiencies are not self-corrected by the instructor after a reasonable interval, the division supervisor should perform any of the following additional interventions, as appropriate:

- a.) Recommend or require remediation of instructor performance deficiency through counseling, mentoring, or continuing education.
- b.) If the deficiency is in the area of course management, restrict the instructor from acting as event IOR until the deficiency is corrected.
- c.) Temporarily suspend instructorship. Such suspension automatically puts the instructor back into mentee status until all performance deficiencies are remedied, as evidenced by formal instructor performance evaluations conducted by a program IT.
- d.) Terminate instructor certification if prior interventions have not proven effective.

4.4.6.7 If the IT and/or region administrator fails to provide corrective interventions, or if there is no appointed region administrator, the division program supervisor may intervene on the program's behalf. In extreme cases, the national program director may also intervene on the program's behalf.

4.8.6 Instructor

4.8.6.1 Qualifications

- a.) Is a current NSP member or associate.
- b.) Successfully completes the program's course(s).
- c.) Successfully completes the Instructor Development course.
- d.) Successfully completes the appropriate Instructor Development mentoring program.

4.8.6.2 Selection

- a.) Initial appointment process
 - a. Submits an instructor application to the appropriate program supervisor or administrator.
 - b. Assists in teaching two or more courses under the supervision of the

appointed mentor.

- c. Appointed by division program supervisor or delegated individual for a three-year period.
- b.) Instructor recertification process (see specific details in QMS section and the discipline's instructor manual)
 - a. Teaching requirements (vary slightly with each discipline).
 - b. Attends a national-, division-, or region-approved continuing education event once every three years.
 - c. Completes all program's annual refresher requirements.

4.8.6.3 Responsibilities

- a.) Teaching
 - a. Actively teaches program's courses.
 - b. Actively teaches program's continuing education/refreshers.
 - c. Maintains cooperative relationship with assigned instructor trainer.
- b.) Quality assurance
 - a. Maintains personal competency in all knowledge and skill areas.
 - b. Responsible for student competency validation.
 - c. May be appointed to act as a mentor for an instructor trainee.
- c.) Administration
 - a. Maintains personal teaching and continuing education record.