

Role of IT in Alaska

In order to be an effective IT, it is probably not possible to also be teaching courses, as the emphasis is on developing and enhancing our instructor cadre. The moment an IT steps forward to teach, it enables the broken parts of our system to remain in place. While it may certainly be required for an IT to teach a course (or portions thereof), they step out the role of IT.

Specific duties of an IT include:

- Oversee the training, certification and evaluation of instructors
- Work with mentors to train new instructor trainees, as assigned by Region Director
- Establish mentoring relationships with current instructors, as assigned by Program Supervisor
- Evaluate individual instructors using QA guidelines (below)
- Maintain personal instructor credential (as outlined in NSP policies)
- Participate in clinics, instructor refreshers and other events to enhance instructor cadre
- Ensure instructor duties and paperwork are completed

To ensure quality control, an IT will be assigned to every educational course in Alaska. As an IOR registers a class, they should contact the Program Supervisor for an IT assignment. Ideally this person would be in the same area, but the Program Supervisor might pick another IT out of the geographic region because a particular IT needs the work to maintain their credential.

The IT serves a one-year term of service and is only renewed if they have been performing IT work. While instructors maintain their activity logs of instruction, ITs should maintain activity logs of “IT activities (as noted above).”

Specific duties of a Mentor include:

- Receive a mentoring assignment from region director
- Meet with instructor candidate and discuss the Individual Development Plan
- Work the IDP with the instructor candidate, making sure to touch each of the required elements
- Recommend the instructor candidate for final IT evaluation

Provide Quality Assurance – for Instructors

This means evaluating all of your assigned instructors on a regular basis, using (provided) objective criteria. There are two portions of instructor QA.

The first set of criteria is three-year renewal criteria – was the instructor active, teaching courses, attending required refreshers, etc. This function is usually performed by the Program Supervisor with input from ITs.

The second set of criteria is delivery-based, and it is the responsibility of each IT to ensure that these quality standards are met by his/her assigned instructors. This will require ITs to physically evaluate instructors during training, develop written records and provide feedback to instructors. The other part of this evaluation will be the actual knowledge and application of the skills in a patrolling environment. This is obviously far more difficult and will require communication with instructors, ITs, patrol representatives and program supervisors.

Another set of evaluation criteria includes the paperwork quality aspects of the course. Was the course registered properly, was the course closed out on time, were all fees collected, did the paperwork go to Dave Skitt, were all assisting instructors identified, was there an IT assigned, were student evaluations performed, was an instructor evaluation performed, and so on.

Instructor Evaluation Criteria (this is an example):

RESOURCES

Uses NSP Materials, Policies and Procedures

- Review textbook, Instructor Manual and other NSP course materials.
- Review program objectives
- Review applicable policies and procedures
- Review registration forms, completion forms and evaluation forms
- Explain differences between courses, clinics, refreshers and continuing education

THE LESSON

Lesson Planning

- Uses written NSP lesson guide
- States objective clearly
- Uses a lesson plan in which the content meets the stated objective
- Incorporates content from previous lessons as a transition to new material
- Plans instructional time to adequately cover all relevant material
- Allows time flexibility to address difficult or abstract concepts

Competency and Subject Matter

- Teaches material based on NSP guidelines and objectives
- Displays competency in knowledge of subject
- Demonstrates appropriate skills competently
- Aligns material presentation to a realistic expectation of student abilities

Teaching Strategies and Techniques

- Uses a variety of methods appropriate to student needs and subject matter (i.e.: lecturing, discussion, modeling, questioning, role-playing, etc.)
- Uses appropriate instructional aids (video, audio, demonstrations, etc.)
- Addresses all learning styles with an adequate mix of auditory, visual and kinesthetic material

- Addresses the specific needs of the adult learner
- Provides opportunities to learn through experimentation and discovery
- Monitors student understanding during the learning process
- Assigns a variety of activities that require application of skills and concepts taught
- Provides time for guided and independent practice
- Summarizes each major phase of the lesson as well as the lesson as a whole
- Demonstrates the ability to communicate verbally and non-verbally
- Uses effective active listening skills

Use of Instructional Time

- Begins instruction promptly
- Avoids unnecessary interruptions and distractions
- Monitors student time on activity or skill performance
- Paces instruction according to lesson plan

Motivational Skills

- Provides challenge appropriate to material being taught
- Provides opportunities for self realized student success
- Encourages assisted and unassisted problem solving
- Gives constructive feedback frequently and promptly

Student Evaluation

- Uses questions appropriate to student needs
- Maintains skill performance at appropriate level
- Maintains all evaluations are objective based
- Provides the opportunity for remediation when necessary
- Ensures that all students have met lesson objectives, or made arrangements for alternatives or incomplete on lesson

Environmental Management

- Organizes learning space to match instructional plans and student needs
- Insures that information can be seen and heard by students
- Provides student comfort level for optimal learning
- Considers all risk management factors
- Uses release forms when necessary

Cause for Termination of Instructor

Instructors, ITs, Program Supervisors, Region Directors and Patrol Representatives need to understand and embrace the importance of the quality assurance process. If an instructor fails to fulfill the responsibilities outline in NSP policies or specific discipline Instructor Manuals, the IT or Program Supervisor should document the problems, attempt to remediate the instructor and make sure there is not compromise in program quality. If remediation is not successful, instructor certification shall be rescinded, in accordance with NSP policies.

Just cause for rescinding instructor certification:

Not maintaining certification or recertification requirements

Unsatisfactory evaluations by IT or program supervisor

Not providing effective learning and teaching to students (as defined by NSP program standards)

Not maintaining professional attitude towards all participants

Failure to use current NSP educational materials

Failure to complete and submit administrative program records, fees, reports within established Division timelines

Deviating from NSP program training standards

Passing a student who fails to meet the concluding objectives as outlined in the program

Failure to deliver effective training that allows students to meet learning objectives