

MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT FOR RECREATIONAL SCUBA INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

These standards provide minimum content requirements for recreational scuba instructor training. These requirements should not be considered as standards for optimum training of a recreational scuba instructor. Instructional programs which extend beyond these requirements should, in fact, be encouraged. The requirements of these standards are meant to be comprehensive but general in nature. That is, these standards present all of the subject areas essential for minimum instructor training for the purpose of training recreational scuba divers, but it does not give a detailed listing of the skills and information encompassed by each area. These items are simply listed in these standards; it is assumed that detailed course outlines which meet these standards would include specific techniques. For a list of recognized training organizations which have published highly detailed course outlines that meet these standards, see Appendix A.

For recommendations regarding subcategories of information to be presented under each subject area, see Appendix B. which contains a list of recognized educational support materials.

Although the information categories outlined are given in what may appear to be a logical sequence, the outline should not be reviewed as a lesson plan. That is, the order in which the information is presented in these standards does not necessarily define the sequence of a class lesson plan. Similarly, the requirements presented in this document do not indicate the emphasis which should be placed upon a particular subject area, or the manner in which these subjects are to be taught. Course outlines, lesson plans and other training aids prepared by recognized training organizations responsible for recreational scuba instructor training are to be used as guidelines for the sequencing and emphasis of course content requirements presented in these standards. Decisions as to sequencing and emphasis are to be at the discretion of the certifying instructor-trainer / evaluator within the recommendations of the recognized training organization and are to be made within the context of the environmental factors, instructor characteristics, and other relevant considerations.

Instructor certification qualifies a certified instructor to engage in training and certifying of recreational scuba divers. It is the intent of these standards that such individuals will have received sanctioned training in the fundamentals of training recreational scuba divers. A certified scuba instructor is qualified to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to conduct educational and scuba skills training and to certify recreational scuba divers through his/her respective recognized training organization.

2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CERTIFICATION: The bearer has completed all requirements of a scuba instructor certification course. This verification is issued by a recognized training organization upon the instructor trainer/evaluator's written authorization confirming the satisfactory completion of all course requirements (as documented in the bearer's individual log and training record).

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR OF SCUBA DIVING: An individual currently qualified and sanctioned by a recognized training organization to teach recreational scuba diving and authorize the issuance of recreational scuba certification. In order to be sanctioned, the instructor must meet the annual renewal requirements of the recognized training organization.

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTOR COURSE: The initial course of instructor training leading to instructor certification issued by a recognized training organization. Successful completion of a course which meets or exceeds these standards, qualifies an individual to apply the knowledge and skills outlined in these standards to conduct educational and scuba skills training and to certify recreational scuba divers through his/her respective recognized training organization.

MINIMUM INSTRUCTOR DIVING SYSTEM: This equipment includes, as a minimum: fins, mask, snorkel, compressed air cylinder and valve, buoyancy control device with low pressure inflator, backpack, regulator, alternate air source (active scuba/air delivery system), submersible pressure gauge, weight ballast system and exposure suit (if appropriate), timing device, depth gauge, knife, compass/direction monitor, emergency signaling device, slate and dive tables.

CURRENT: Within one (1) year of the date certification or other document was issued.

DIVER RESCUE: Training offered by a recognized training organization that includes diving, specific classroom and water training in the areas of self aid, self assist, buddy aid, buddy assist, emergency planning and accident procedures.

3. PREREQUISITES

In order to qualify for enrollment in an instructor course an individual shall meet the following minimum prerequisites.

- 3.1 **Age.** The individual shall be at least 18 years of age; there is no upper limit.
- 3.2 **Medical Examination.** The individual shall have a current medical examination and approval for diving by a licensed physician prior to engaging in Scuba Water Skills.
- 3.3 **Logged Dives.** The individual shall have completed and logged at least 40 open water dives (as documented in the bearer's individual log book).
- 3.4 **Minimum Instructor Diving System.** The individual shall possess the minimum instructor diving system.
- 3.5 **Minimum Diver Certification.** The individual shall have completed the requirements and be certified at least open water diver.

4. ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTIFICATION

In order to be certified as an instructor, an individual shall meet the following minimum eligibility requirements.

- 4.1 **Physical Conditioning and Watermanship Evaluation.** The individual shall effectively demonstrate basic watermanship ability by performing to a certified instructor trainer/evaluator the watermanship evaluation required by the recognized training organization.
- 4.2 **Knowledge.** The individual shall take and pass a written examination of scuba diving and documentation of the examination shall be retained by the certifying training organization. Each training organization is to have available to RSTC, Inc. a copy of their current instructor exam. This examination shall reflect instructor knowledge of equipment, physics of diving, physiology of diving, use of the dive tables, diving environment, and training standards as specified by the recognized training organization.
- 4.3 **Scuba Skills.** The individual shall satisfactorily demonstrate, to a certified instructor trainer/evaluator, instructor level scuba skills required by the recognized training organization, and as outlined in Section 5 of these standards.
- 4.4 **CPR.** The individual shall complete training in CPR as required by the recognized training organization, and it shall be current at the time of certification. CPR may be taught during the instructor course, but may not be counted towards the minimum course hours.
- 4.5 **First Aid.** The individual shall complete training in First Aid as required by the recognized training organization, and it shall be current at time of certification. First Aid may be taught during the instructor course, but may not be counted towards the minimum course hours.
- 4.6 **Diver Rescue.** The individual shall complete training in diver rescue skills and satisfactorily demonstrate diver rescue skills by completing at least 1 open water rescue to a certified instructor trainer/evaluator as required by the recognized training organization. Diver Rescue may be taught during the instructor course.
- 4.7 **Diver Supervisor.** The individual shall complete training in group control and supervision of diver activities as required by the recognized training organization.
- 4.8 **Teaching Presentation Training.** The individual shall complete training in lesson preparation, planning and delivery of lecture, pool/confined water skills and open water skills teaching presentations as required by the recognized training organization.
- 4.9 **Training Hours.** The individual shall complete at least 100 hours of specialized training/evaluation. A minimum of 50 hours of this training/evaluation is to occur under the supervision of an instructor trainer/evaluator and is to include the topics outlined in Section 5.2. The remaining hours are to include, but are not limited to, the training outlined in Section 4.6 and 4.7.
- 4.10 **Dive Experience.** Appropriate Instructor Training records are to be retained by the recognized training organization.

5. MINIMUM COURSE CONTENT

5.1 **Introduction.** The following information should be made available to instructor candidates prior to, or during, the first class meeting.

- I. Certification requirements (see section 3 and 4)
- II. Scope of course A. Content B. Limitations of eventual qualification
- III. Equipment requirements
- IV. Course procedures

5.2 **Course Topics.** The individual shall complete training under the supervision of an instructor trainer/evaluator. Training is to include the topics as required by the recognized training organization and as outlined in this section.

- I. Lesson preparation, lesson planning, lesson delivery
- II. Review of pool and open water procedures as required by the recognized training organization
- III. Pool/confined water and open water problem solving
- IV. Deliver at least three lecture teaching presentations, three pool/confined water skills teaching presentations and three open water skills teaching presentations
- V. Review and discussion of the training standards of the recognized training organization
- VI. Discussion of the recognized training organizations requirements for diver certification
- VII. Discussion of the professionalism and ethical responsibility of a certified instructor of scuba diving
- VIII. Indication of knowledge as outlined in 4.2

5.3 **Candidate Lecture Presentations.** The individual shall demonstrate to a certified instructor trainer / evaluator lesson preparation, planning and delivery of at least three lecture teaching presentations from the topics outlined in this section as required by the recognized training organization.

- I. Equipment
- II. Physics of diving
- III. Medical problems related to diving
- IV. Use of diving tables
- V. Diving environment
- VI. Dive planning
- VII. Communications, both underwater and on the surface
- VIII. Diver assistance (self/buddy)
- IX. Recommended safe diving practices
- X. Boat diving procedures

5.4 **Pool / Confined Water Scuba Skills.** The individual shall demonstrate to a certified instructor trainer/evaluator personal diving skills as outlined in this section, in addition to lesson preparation, planning and delivery (including briefing and debriefing), group control and supervision, and problem solving for at least three pool/confined water skills teaching presentations from the topics outlined in this section, and as required by the recognized training organization.

- I. Diving system assembly and disassembly
- II. Equipment inspection
- III. Entries and exits
- IV. Proper weighting

- V. Mouthpiece clearing-snorkel and regulator
- VI. Regulator retrieval
- VII. Regulator/snorkel exchanges at the surface
- VIII. Controlled descents and ascents
- IX. Underwater swimming
- X. Mask clearing
- XI. Underwater exercises-with and without mask
- XII. Buddy system techniques
- XIII. Underwater problem solving
- XIV. Surface - snorkel swimming with full diving system
- XV. Weight/ballast system removal and replacement
- XVI. Scuba system removal and replacement
- XVII. Out – of - air emergency alternatives

5.5 **Open Water Scuba Skills.** The individual, wearing an instructional scuba system, shall demonstrate to a certified instructor trainer/evaluator in the open water, lesson preparation, planning and delivery (including briefing and debriefing), group control and supervision, and problem solving for at least three open water skills teaching presentations from the topics outlined in this section, and as required by the recognized training organization.

- I. Diving system assembly and disassembly
- II. Equipment inspection
- III. Entries and exits
- IV. Proper weighting
- V. Mouthpiece clearing - snorkel and regulator
- VI. Regulator retrieval
- VII. Regulator/snorkel exchanges at the surface
- VIII. Controlled descents and ascents
- IX. Underwater swimming
- X. Mask clearing
- XI. Buddy - system techniques
- XII. Underwater and surface buoyancy control
- XIII. Diver assistance techniques
- XIV. Surface - snorkel swimming
- XV. Weight/ballast system removal and replacement
- XVI. Scuba system removal and replacement
- XVII. Out – of - air emergency alternatives
- XVIII. Equipment care and maintenance