

## ISSO Certified Instructor Levels

### Level I: New instructor.

#### Requirements:

- Must pass written exam (80% or higher).
- Demonstrate basic understanding of saddle fitting,
  - On a horse the organizers provide, have the candidate explain which of 3-4 saddles correctly fits that horse. Have candidate explain why it does or does not fit and what they'd try to "make it usable", or would they flatly refuse to use that saddle with that horse
- Give a first-timer aside lesson to someone who already rides astride, demonstrating:
  - Establishing student's experience and goals for the lesson
  - Candidate checks saddle to fit horse & rider
  - Explanation of correct positioning of the student to be square and level on the saddle
  - Explain safety grip to student
  - Explain to the student the basic differences between riding each gait astride and aside
  - Provide the student with strategies to make SS work for her/him at these gaits
  - Candidate is to explain (when appropriate) how right and left lead canters differ and make an informed decision as to whether that rider should be asked to canter left at the first lesson.

### Level II: Instructors with prior side-saddle experience teaching at an intermediate level

#### Requirements:

- Must pass written exam (80% or higher).
- Be able to demonstrate all of Level I,
- Lessons will include more advanced instructions which may include lateral movements, collection, tempo changes, patterns, cavaletti work, single cross rails or jumps, etc. Include in the lesson methods for each to improve/advance in their given discipline and/or add challenges, giving instruction on how-tos aside, whys generally i.e., why s/he would include this exercise in a training routine. We need to HEAR what's going through the instructor's mind. For example – why set up cavaletti for this one, why introduce a shoulder fore to this one, why encourage a student to vary stride length within a gait, why set up this type of jump-gymnastic for this horse/rider?
- Must give a group lesson teaching 3-4 intermediate students or 2 students of differing riding abilities

**Level III:** Most experienced side-saddle instructors with knowledge of multiple disciplines and breeds. These instructors should be able to adapt their teaching skills to differing breeds, saddle types, and advanced goals of the rider.

#### Requirements:

- ◆ Must pass written exam (80% or higher).
- ◆ Must give a lesson to an advanced student on a horse capable of the advanced movements or cues. Be able to assist student to accomplish aside what they can normally achieve astride (or more!)
- ◆ Lesson should not just focus on riding in the side saddle and be able address any problems or issues found with horse or rider attempting more advanced work. Demonstrate ability to help rider explore going beyond their current comfort level in their given discipline while riding aside. Examples may include using the side saddle while accomplishing specific riding goals such as completing reining or western riding patterns, full jump courses, dressage tests, etc.
- ◆ Must teach a group lesson with 3-4 riders with different levels of ability.
- ◆ Examiners would need to be the equivalent of Level II Instructors with considerable experience, preferably with knowledge of more than one seat/discipline/breed.

Applicants with a medical reason for being unable to ride any longer would be eligible to take the exam and certify as an instructor. They should be able to document their medical disability as well as their previous experience with riding aside with the event organizers prior to testing.