

ISLA Academy Non-negotiables

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Overview:

The purpose of this document is to outline the *non-negotiable* responsibilities, duties, and details of the Operation Commander & Head Instructor that are responsible for running an ISLA training academy. A “non-negotiable” is defined as an action being listed in this document that is mandatory for a ISLA leader to obey, and not deviate from under any circumstances. Failure to follow any ISLA non-negotiables may revoke leadership privileges of an Operation Commander & Head Instructor, as well as possible discredit the ISLA brand, its affiliates, the value of the academy certification and potentially danger lives in the field.

Non-negotiables:

- Academy Curriculum: An ISLA basic academy curriculum is broken into 30 hours of course instruction split 10 hours over the course of 3 days. This includes 9 hours of course lecture, 4.5 hours of lunch break (which is designed for open discussion among ISLA instructors and academy cadets), 5 physical event activities, 5 beach workshops allotments, a quiz, practical and written exam. The Operation Commander or Head Instructor may use their discretion to change the order of the schedule if logistics or conditions determine that is needed, BUT they MAY NOT, under any circumstance, change or modify the course curriculum in any way. Examples condoning a course schedule change include consolidating the physical events and beach workshops to one half a day, and the lectures to another, if car travel of more than 15 minutes is needed to get from lecture hall to beach, etc. to save time. Consolidating physical events, and lectures is not ideal, but critical in a situation like above to save time.
- Course Module Four Corners: In the Four Corners activity, two of the activities must be: 1.) Drowning resuscitation/CPR/AED, & 2.) Bleeding Control. The third and fourth topics are up to the Head Instructor to decide. Some examples are: code X scenario, buoy signal lecture, spinal trauma choke-saving, etc.
- Course Modules: There are various lectures for 8-9 lecture spots. If the open water area where the training occurs also has many prominent and accessible lakes and rivers, it is also advised to teach the swift water and lake/river lifeguard technique lectures. These may replace the _____ lecture. The academy is still an open water academy but covers slight alternative areas to share basic information on those types of water zones.
- Hazardous Conditions: Any Sr. Instructor may at any time call off a physical event that for any reason seems too dangerous to run a course based on the surf conditions and lack of competent resources or modify the course to keep it safe. It is important that a back-up plan is always in place: i.e. knowing the surf report so any large surf surprises are minimized, knowing of a safer beach area with

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swell block, pool or lake water area, etc. The priority of any training academy is to provide a safe place for academy cadets to learn for 30 hours. ISLA professional certificates are secondary to providing a safe environment for the academy.

- Buoy Signals: Though there are many different buoy signals taught all over the world, it is critical that all ISLA instructors are aware and utilize the three ISLA buoy signals during the academy (as well as teach these to the academy cadets): Code 4 (I'm OK, are you OK?) which is defined as a buoy above the head parallel to the ground or a fist on the head. Code 2 (assistance needed or come to me): buoy pointed perpendicular to the ground or one hand with fist straight in the air. Code 3 (life threatening emergency): buoy pointed perpendicular to the ground and waving side to side, or straight arm with fist waving side to side.
- Pass and Failure: Every physical event, test, practical exam, etc., must have a verified point sheet for each course participant. Failure to present any proof of success or failure will cause complications with academy cadets thinking they deserve to pass for whatever reason and you not being able to prove them wrong, thus discrediting the standardization of the course. Getting passing lifeguards is important, but never compromise course safety or certifying an unqualified cadet is more important. Remind unqualified cadets that a Beach Safeguard certificate is very valuable for their learning.
- Master Attendance: the academy cannot commence until it is confirmed that all cadets' names, emails (if applicable), emergency contacts, and beanie #s are saved and backed up in an accessible spreadsheet, and that cadets are handed beanies, have memorized their beanie numbers, and have been lectured and demonstrate their ability to properly wear a beanie.
- Squads and Roll Call: A lecture on assigning squads is mandatory on the first day of the course before anyone goes in the water. Proper professional squads are important for safety and displaying professionalism. Squads must be lined up, with a double attendance (instructors count academy cadets while another instructor asks all squad leaders if "everyone is there?") EACH time the cadets are about to go in the water, and EACH time they immediately come out. Squad attendance should be taken multiple times a day.
- Beanies: Each cadet and instructor must know and demonstrate the proper way to tie a beanie, and that ALL beanies must be returned. The Head Instructor must

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confirm all beanies have been returned. Beanies MUST always be worn by both instructors and cadets when in the water. This is defined as beyond ankle deep water or more.

- Safety Aiding: All Sr. Instructors assigned to positions must be experts in the safety-aid technique, running a safety aided event, and be able to clearly run any safety aid course, communicate and know the limits of their safety aid resources.
- Discipline: Discipline is a shared burden of the academy cadets and the instructors. When cadets call out instructors for breaking a rule, ALL instructors must participate in the discipline. When cadets are late or break rules, it is a fault of both the instructors lack of clear communication, and the cadets lack of listening, thus both groups as a cohesive team participate in the discipline. Discipline should always be a militarized, but shared burden to show teamwork and cohesiveness.
- CLASS MORALE: be looking sharp, being professional, sharing the burden of discipline, keeping tight to schedules and rules, ensure that the academy runs strongly, and that the admiration and respect of the cadets is earned as they give it their all. All these traits start with the attitudes and professionalism of the instructors. Have fun with the academy, but always within the constraints of what's appropriate and necessary for a safe training.

- Day Zero:
 - Instructor Physical Event: All ISLA volunteers must pass a physical event. The purpose of this event is for senior trip leaders to assess the swimming ability of ALL ISLA volunteers in the surf. Sr Instructors must visually confirm ALL ISLA volunteers has demonstrated their ability to high step, dolphin, and swim head down competently through the surf and in a direct line towards an outside turn around point. ISLA volunteers that do not complete this event may not be safety aids in the water, or course buoys (Though this is kept a secret from academy cadets). They will remain on the beach doing on land duties or working with the Beach Safeguard Group.
 - Emergency Plan: An emergency plan must be discussed with all ISLA instructors. IE, the # to call for emergencies, the course of action for

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emergencies, directions to the hospital, resources in the FA kit, talk through certain scenarios.

- Beanie Tying: ALL instructors must properly tie their beanies. Instructors losing beanies in the water is unacceptable and sets a standard for academy cadets to lose their beanies.