



UNITED STATES *Dressage* FEDERATION
USDF Instructor/Trainer Program

Testing Candidate Guidelines

effective April 1, 2012

I. Introduction

Certification implies recognition by the United States Dressage Federation (USDF) of the candidate's achievement and capabilities. To be certified means that the candidate has demonstrated the knowledge and abilities necessary to teach the concepts of dressage and has met specified standards and proficiencies.

Participating in the USDF Instructor/Trainer Certification Program is voluntary. It is the goal of USDF that horses and students are taught with humane and logical methods.

Categories

USDF Instructor/Trainer Certification is offered at three levels:

- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainer; Training – First Level
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainer; Second Level
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainer; Third – Fourth Level

NOTE: A candidate must achieve Training-First Level certification before achieving Second Level certification and must achieve Second Level certification before achieving Third -Fourth Level certification. However, a candidate may be tested for more than one level of certification at one testing site, with approval from the USDF Instructor/Trainer Committee. In this situation, the candidate will be scheduled for all Training-First level sessions first – these sessions must be passed before candidate will be allowed to continue on to Second Level sessions. All Second Level sessions must be passed before candidate will be allowed to continue on to Third – Fourth Level sessions.

Purpose for Training – First Level Instructor/Trainer Certification Exam

This level is designed to assess the candidate's ability to demonstrate the correct development of horse and rider through the basic levels of the Pyramid of Training. The instructor must demonstrate insight into the progression of dressage, Training through First Level, and be able to effectively impart this knowledge to students, helping them to achieve correct training of the horse to this level. Candidates are also assessed in their proficiency to lunge a horse and to give a basic seat lesson, appropriate to the level of the rider.

Purpose for Second Level Instructor/Trainer Certification Exam

This level is designed to assess the candidate's ability to provide the correct foundation for beginning collection as required for Second Level. Candidates must demonstrate ability to impart correct training and teaching philosophy, as well as developing the rider's seat and position in advanced seat lessons on the lunge.

Purpose for Third-Fourth Level Instructor/Trainer Certification Exam

This level is designed to assess the candidate's ability to demonstrate progressive collection as required for Third and Fourth Levels. Candidates must demonstrate understanding of the requirements and

interconnection of the elements of the Pyramid of Training. They must be able to demonstrate their effectiveness, imparting this knowledge to students, helping them to achieve correct training of the horse.

Each **certification testing** is organized by the USDF office with the help of a local organizer and/or Group Member Organization/Region, if applicable. USDF is responsible for selecting candidates and hiring the examiners. The local organizer will find a local facility which could be donated for the use of the testing and any other materials that could be donated, such as a sponsor for meals for candidates and examiners. Suitable sites must have the following available:

- At least one indoor/covered **and** one outdoor arena, both must be large enough for a 20 x 60 dressage arena, plus additional areas for lungeing and warm-up.
- Stalls are needed for approximately 10-20 horses.

The Organizer's Guidelines for Workshops and Testings is available from USDF.

II. Educational Preparation

Workshops

The USDF Instructor/Trainer Program workshops are designed to educate dressage riders of all levels. They are open to instructors, aspiring instructors and amateurs. USDF workshops provide a wonderful opportunity for all students of dressage to learn about classical theories of riding, training, teaching, lungeing and seat lessons. Participants will also be able to improve their practical skills under the guidance of USDF qualified workshop leaders. Apart from acquiring more theoretical knowledge and improving their practical skills, participants may also gain more understanding of whether or not their current level of expertise approaches the standard needed to become a USDF Certified Instructor.

There are three workshops offered: a Riding/Training Workshop, a Teaching Workshop, and a Lungeing Workshop. Workshops are taught by USDF Faculty and Examiners, all of whom are highly respected and accomplished in the dressage community.

Categories and Purpose

LUNGEING: to teach and review correct lungeing principles and techniques for training the horse and rider. Workshops are offered as follows:

- USDF Instructor/Trainer Lungeing of the Horse
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Lungeing of the Rider/Seat Lesson through First Level
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Lungeing of the Rider/Seat Lesson through Second Level

RIDING: to review and apply the classical methods of schooling the dressage horse, and to provide an opportunity for participants to improve their practical riding skills, their ability to assess the horse's training, as well as their ability to improve the horse's way of going and their knowledge of how to relate the concepts of the Pyramid of Training in practical training sessions. Workshops are offered as follows:

- USDF Instructor/Trainer Riding Workshop; Through First Level
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Riding Workshop Riding through Second Level
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Riding Workshop Third through Fourth Level

TEACHING: to review and develop effective teaching skills that will enable the participants to become more competent instructors. The workshop is an opportunity for participants to improve their ability to assess students, and expand the participants' knowledge of how to relate the concepts of the Pyramid of Training to the practice of teaching. The participants will be evaluated on their presentations of private lessons. Workshops are offered as follows:

- USDF Instructor/Trainer Teaching Workshop through First Level
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Teaching Workshop through Second Level
- USDF Instructor/Trainer Teaching Workshop through Fourth Level

Organizers may determine in advance or through the application process which type of workshop they will offer. If there is a mix of candidates the organizer may choose to do one day of each level.

The order of the workshops will be determined by the organizer. Keep in mind that from a curriculum perspective, the logical progression is lungeing, riding, teaching. However experience has shown that lungeing is often the most difficult from a practical skill level which may be intimidating to Participants. Organizers will be the most familiar with the skill level of participants and will be able to choose the appropriate sequence to create the best learning environment for participants.

Upon approval from USDF, organizers may conduct a workshop consisting of a mixed curriculum. The content of this workshop should be based on the needs of the Participants.

In all levels of the Workshops, Participants are in a learning environment which includes lectures (supported by handouts and audio visual aids), hands-on sessions, discussion, and feedback. The Participants will teach lessons, lunge horses and horse/rider combinations, and ride horses. They work on their theory, methodology and techniques of classical dressage. Participants and faculty interact a great deal during each session. The faculty will want to know the Participant's reasons behind a certain approach or method. There will be discussion regarding evaluation of horses and the riders. The other Participants, auditors, and volunteers listen and, if appropriate, join in the discussion as well. The workshop atmosphere is supportive of discussion and inquiry. This adds to the educational quality of the program. It is recommended that the workshops be offered in the sequence lungeing, riding and teaching so that there is a progressive approach to developing correct seat and position.

Pre-Certification Clinic (Mock Testing)

In addition to the workshops, USDF also offers a Pre-Certification Clinic, which is a mock-testing or a dress rehearsal of a Certification Testing. In contrast to a workshop, the Pre-Certification Clinic is conducted like a testing. The Examiner/Senior Faculty assesses the level of practical skill and theoretical knowledge of the Participants. Although the workshops and pre-certification clinic are not required for certification, they are strongly recommended. Candidates who have participated in these programs have demonstrated a higher success rate at Certification Testing. This is also an opportunity for candidates to decide if they are ready to take the exam, or if they should seek further education.

During a Pre-Certification Clinic, the examiner will not be teaching Participants how to lunge, how to teach, or how to train. They are an evaluating the session for the Participants. For education on "how to," participants should sign up for a workshop.

Online Education

e-TRAK, USDF's online learning center for dressage and equine education, offers in-depth study courses based on the USDF Lungeing, Training and Teaching Manuals, as well as the Lungeing video used in our workshop curriculum. Candidates are encouraged to complete these courses.

III. Standards of Proficiency

- USDF Certified Instructors/Trainers exemplify the highest standards, protecting the interests of both students and horses as well as the traditions of classical dressage as outlined in the Pyramid of Training. Instructors are responsible for the future of dressage through the riders they influence.
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainers are committed to the goal of the harmonious development of the physique and ability of the horse, endeavoring to help students make their horses calm, supple, loose, and flexible, but also confident, attentive, and keen, thus achieving perfect harmony with the rider.
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainers have an in-depth understanding of the classical dressage theory and its application to "real life" scenarios. They know the purpose, the progression, and the connection between the various school movements and can recognize the difficulties and typical mistakes.
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainers have analytical skills rooted in classical methodology to accurately assess a horse's strong and weak qualities. They will be able to articulate an appropriate prescription for the horse's schooling. They demonstrate a solid, balanced and effective seat and tactful aids required to produce the desired effect on a variety of horses.
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainers have a broad base of teaching experience with a reservoir of practical knowledge to draw upon. They have evaluative skills needed to analyze the training requirements of horses and students. They are able to prescribe a solution appropriate to the student's level of experience and current ability. They are able to transfer their knowledge, imparting concepts and feelings in order to produce independent riders.
- USDF Certified Instructor/Trainers present lessons that are organized focused and logical, yet creative and flexible in order to achieve success. Their professional demeanor will demonstrate poise, confidence and command of the arena. Their communication skills need to show effective use of grammar, vocabulary, voice, and diction. They establish rapport with horse and rider, demonstrating compassion and encouragement.

IV. Testing

The testing is meant to be a thorough evaluation and examination of the candidate's expertise in the skills relevant to success in the dressage teaching and training profession. USDF is concerned that candidates who are certified are not simply producing riders with winning scores, but rather, riders who can think about their training and feel the results and effect on the horse.

Candidate applications are available from the USDF office and must be received in the USDF Office **eight weeks** prior to testing. Selection of candidates for each test is made by USDF. Application information is confidential. Testing dates and locations are available from USDF.

At all levels:

- Each session will be 45 minutes in length
- The schedule will be set by USDF and approved by the examiners, with input from the local organizer.
 - The examiners and/or staff liaison may change the schedule on site, with input from the local organizer, due to weather, demo horse/rider concerns, or other situations that arise during the test. Every effort will be made to stay with the original schedule; however, candidates should be flexible.
 - In the case of weather related changes, it may be necessary for two candidates to be tested in one ring at the same time.
- The candidates will be evaluated by a minimum of two examiners during a testing.
- Candidates will be asked questions during all lungeing, riding and teaching phases.
- Scores are based on a 1 to 5 scale:
 - 1 = Unacceptable; 2 = Marginal; 3 = Average; 4 = Good; 5 = Excellent
- Each safety section must receive a 'pass'.
- Candidates must pass all sections with a minimum score of 70%.
- If the candidate fails one section, he/she may retest that particular section at a later time.

In all cases, if a candidate requests to retest any section(s) of a final exam she/he must be approved by the USDF Instructor/Trainer Committee (through the program's liaison).

Candidates requesting their **first retest** will be required to include a written summary of preparation to retest.

Candidates requesting to retest the **same section a second time or subsequent time** must take the following steps before reapplying:

- Seek mentoring
 - Candidates may seek mentoring from a member of the program's faculty or from an examiner. Candidates may contact a Faculty Member or Examiner directly or they may contact the USDF Instructor/Trainer Program Liaison.
 - Candidates may seek approval from the Instructor/Trainer Committee (through the program's Liaison) to mentor with a certified instructor.
 - A list of current Faculty Member, Examiners and Certified Instructors is available on the USDF Website or by contacting the Instructor/Trainer Program Liaison. In both cases, arrangements are to be made privately between the mentor and the candidate.
- Be assessed by a program Examiner as 'ready to test'. This may be done either in a workshop, pre-certification or privately. An evaluation from this session must be submitted to USDF with retest application. Contact the program's liaison for the appropriate form.

Certified Instructor/Trainer; Training – First Level

This testing consists of six sections; riding, lungeing the horse, giving a seat (lunge) lesson, teaching private lessons, verbal and written exam. It is necessary to pass all six sections to be certified. A score of 70% or higher is required in each section in order to pass.

Certified Instructor/Trainer; Second Level

This testing consists of five sections: riding, giving a seat (lunge) lesson, teaching private lessons, verbal and written exam. It is necessary to pass all five sections to be certified. A score of 70% or higher is required in each section in order to pass.

Certified Instructor/Trainer; Third through Fourth Level

This testing consists of four sections: riding, teaching private lessons, verbal and written exam. It is necessary to pass all four sections to be certified. A score of 70% or higher is required in each section in order to pass.

V. Riding Exam

Purpose

The purpose of the riding exam is to demonstrate the candidate's ability to:

- Analyze a horse's strengths and weaknesses,
- Determine training problems,
- Determine an appropriate course for improvement,
- Demonstrate correct riding seat and position,
- Use classical training methods effectively on a variety of horses.
- Improve the horse's way of going.

Format

At Training – First Level, each candidate will ride one horse, in a snaffle bridle. This horse may be familiar or unfamiliar to the candidate.

At Second Level, each candidate will ride two horses, in a snaffle bridle. One of the two horses must be unfamiliar to the candidate.

At Third-Fourth Level, each candidate will ride two horses: one in the double bridle and one in the snaffle. One of the two horses can be a horse familiar to the candidate.

At all levels, candidates are strongly encouraged to bring a horse. Organizers are not always able to provide horses at the appropriate levels for every candidate. Candidates must inform the local organizer at least two weeks prior to the exam if he/she plans to bring a horse to ride, and type of bridle used.

- **Tack**

It is the candidate's responsibility to check with the organizer and find the horse, its owner and its tack well ahead of time. Allow time for grooming, tacking up, tack inspection, warm-up and time to get to the arena. When tacking up the horse in the barn, be sure to check all the tack. If the equipment is unsafe, ill fitting, or uncomfortable for the horse, ask the owner for permission to change it. If the owner refuses, simply report the problem to the examiner. Candidates are responsible for the wraps or boots used on the horse.

With the examiner, discuss the equipment. Briefly state your opinion of the bridle, fit of equipment and any adjustments made, safety of equipment, comfort for the horse. This tack check will either be a pass or fail. If the candidate fails, he/she will fail the entire section.

- **Warm-up**

You may warm-up the horse outside the testing arena just prior to the session, **for approximately 15 minutes**. After entering the testing arena, continue to warm up the horse and familiarize the horse with the unfamiliar arena. The examiners will want to see the warm-up. The examiners will want to see the horse in all three gaits (walk, trot, and canter) and in both directions.

If, while in the warm-up area, the horse is discovered to be unsound, unsafe or unsuitable talk to the local organizer and a new horse will be arranged.

- **Assessment**

The examiner will ask for an initial assessment of the horse. Gather the following information from the owner and during the warm-up:

- History: age, sex, breed, past training history, current schooling, showing experience, soundness history, level of fitness, and temperament.
- Basic conformation: body type, bone structure, top line and muscle conditioning, ailments, soreness.
- Current condition: overall health, conditioning, coat condition, indications of heat and/or swelling, attitude.
- Quality of gaits
- Quality of the work as related to the Pyramid of Training.

- **Advice on Assessments**

- **Be specific** - don't just spout truisms. Some general impressions can apply to almost any horse, i.e., "needs more throughness." Qualify terms with observations showing a working knowledge of what is happening with the horse while being ridden.
- **Use professional vocabulary.** Some self-expression in vocabulary is fine as long as the choice of words remains professional and shows respect for the horse, the owner, and the theory.
- **The assessment should be concise but thorough.** Remember that the major goal is to discuss your perception of the horse's strengths and weaknesses in training.
- **Be positive regarding the horse.** Professional trainers must have a love for the animal, and must show that love by appreciating the uniqueness and potential in all horses.

- **Schooling Phase**

School the horse and work on the areas you have identified. Do not feel compelled to use "all of the tricks in the book." Keep a purposeful approach in your riding. Remember specific goals to accomplish. Work the horse at all three gaits. Remember to pay attention to equitation, and keep an eye on the clock.

In the plan for the schooling phase, consider the following to determine the exercises you will use:

- Regularity of horse's gaits
- Horse's education level
- Horse's age and fitness
- Riding conditions, footing, weather
- Horse's temperament
- Classical theory that supports your choice of exercises

- **Cool Down**

Demonstrate proper cool down techniques.

- **Final Assessment**

At the end of the session the examiner will call the candidate over for a final discussion. First express the positive, and afterwards evaluate the negative. Relate the initial assessment to the schooling plan and final evaluation. What needs to be done tomorrow? Next week? Next month?

After the riding session, the horse should be properly cooled out before being put away. Return all borrowed equipment. If the schedule is tight, talk with the organizer and locate an assistant to assist when the session is over.

• **Riding Score Sheet:**

1. Shows concern for safety and fit of tack	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
2. Rider's seat and position	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
3. Rider's effectiveness	<u> </u> x 2 =	<u> </u>
4. Correct/Classical methods	<u> </u> x 2 =	<u> </u>
5. Demonstration of objectives	<u> </u> x 2 =	<u> </u>
Discussion with Examiner(s)		
6. Accurate assessment of horse's strong/weak points	<u> </u> x 2 =	<u> </u>
7. Appropriate prescription for horse's future schooling	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Total possible points: 50
 Passing Score: 35

- The score sheet for the **Third-Fourth Level** session in the double bridle includes a line item on "Appropriate use of double bridle" (coefficient of two). The total possible points are 60, passing score of 42.
- At Second Level and Third – Fourth Level, the scores for each riding session scores will be combined and the average score must be a minimum of 70% or higher.

VI. Lungeing the Horse

Purpose

The lungeing of the horse exam demonstrates the ability to:

- Analyze a horse's strengths and weaknesses, state of relaxation, balance, rhythm, suppleness, engagement.
- Determine training problems; evaluate physical development, i.e. topline
- Determine an appropriate course for improvement.
- Demonstrate correct lungeing technique.
- Use classical training methods effectively on a variety of horses.

Format

The horse will not be familiar to the candidate.

- If, while in the warm-up area, the horse is discovered to be unsound, unsafe or unsuitable talk to the local organizer and a new horse will be arranged. When you tack up the lunge horse, if the horse is full of excess energy, it is appropriate to lunge the horse prior to the session, outside of the testing area.

• **Tack**

Bring your own lunge equipment to the testing. This should include cavesson, side reins, and surcingle if you decide to use one with the saddle, lunge line, bucking strap and whip.

All your equipment is to be assembled and the horse tacked up prior to entry into the ring. It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure the cavesson fits, the side reins are appropriate length, and

that the horse has wraps appropriately applied. **Remember to wear gloves and an ASTM approved helmet and remove spurs.**

If the equipment will not fit, ask the local organizer to help find additional equipment. Please plan time accordingly. If the schedule is tight and assistance is required in getting the horse ready, ask the local organizer for help.

- **Warm-up**

Even if examiners are finishing a score sheet from a previous test, go in and ask permission to get started. The examiner may ask some preliminary questions. First, give a brief tack check report. Review if equipment is suitable and fits correctly. Briefly mention any adjustments you made, or the need for different equipment, if available.

- **Assessment**

The examiner will ask for an initial assessment of the horse. Gather the following information from the owner and during the warm-up:

- History: age, sex, breed, past training history, current schooling, showing experience, soundness history, level of fitness, and temperament.
- Basic conformation: body type, bone structure, top line and muscle conditioning, ailments, soreness.
- Current condition: overall health, conditioning, coat condition, indications of heat and/or swelling, attitude.
- Gaits
- Quality of the work as related to the Pyramid of Training.

Examiner's questions might include:

- What is your evaluation of the horse's gaits?
- What is your evaluation of the horse's rhythm, tempo, relaxation, balance, suppleness, impulsion, etc.?
- What two specific qualities would you like to work on?
- What would you do to improve those qualities?

- **Schooling Phase**

After the initial assessment, continue to school the horse. Work the horse at all three gaits, both directions.

- **Cool Down**

Demonstrate proper cool down techniques.

- **Final Assessment**

The candidate must be able to answer the following:

- Were you pleased with the session?
- Did you accomplish what you wanted to?
- Did the horse respond to your schooling?
- What would be your plan if this horse was in your barn?

• **Lunge the Horse - Score Sheet:**

Section One: Lungeing Technique Evaluation

Evaluative Criteria is Pass/Fail. Candidate must pass every item in this section to pass this session.

	<u>Pass/Fail</u>
A. Correct fit of tack: bridle, cavesson, side reins, surcingle, saddle, and boots or bandages	_____
B. Safe and proper use of equipment:	
1. Lunge line	_____
2. Whip	_____
3. Side reins	_____
4. Voice	_____

Section One: Pass _____ Fail _____

Section Two: Application and Knowledge Evaluation

Evaluative Criteria: 1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Weak, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

	<u>SCORE (1-5)</u>
A. Assessment of horse	_____
B. Plan for improvement	_____
C. Success	_____ x 2 = _____
D. Knowledge of lungeing different types of horses and results desired	_____
E. Turn out and professional demeanor	_____
F. Lungeing technique and skill	_____

Total Points: Total possible points: 35

Certified Instructor/Trainer Passing Score: 24.5

VII. Lungeing a Rider (Seat Lesson)

Purpose

The purpose of the lungeing of the horse and rider exam is to demonstrate the candidate's ability to:

- Analyze rider's position and seat.
- Give appropriate exercises to improve position and seat.
- Demonstrate correct lungeing technique.
- Give an organized lesson appropriate to rider's skills and problems.

Format

For this session, candidate may use a familiar horse, but the rider must be unfamiliar to the instructor.

• **Tack**

Have all your equipment assembled and the horse tacked up. It is candidate's responsibility to make sure the cavesson fits, the side reins are appropriate length, and that the horse has boots/wraps appropriately applied. **Make sure that the rider has on an ASTM approved helmet and no spurs. Remember to wear gloves, an ASTM approved helmet, and no spurs.**

If the equipment will not fit, check with the local organizer to find additional equipment. Plan your time accordingly. If the schedule is tight and assistance is needed in getting the horse ready, ask the local organizer.

- **Warm-up**

For the sake of time and safety, candidates are encouraged to lunge the horse without the rider prior to the lesson time, outside of the testing arena.

- Do not lunge the horse with the rider prior to your test.
- If, while in the warm-up area, the horse is discovered to be unsound, unsafe or unsuitable talk to the local organizer and a new horse will be arranged. **Do not put yourself or the student in a dangerous position.**

At the scheduled time, the candidate should then bring the horse into the ring, lunge it for a short time without the rider, but with the side reins. **When the rider mounts up, the side reins MUST be unhooked. If the rider needs to dismount for any reason, the side reins MUST be unhooked. Failure to do this will result in not passing the safety section of this phase.**

- **Assessment**

After the rider has mounted and worked with the candidate for a short time, the examiner will ask the candidate some questions.

- Give a brief tack check report, as well as a report on the warm up outside the arena.
- Assess the rider's seat and position, and any areas needing improvement.

- **Schooling Phase**

After assessment, return to the lesson, this should be presented in an organized, logical fashion. **If appropriate to the rider's ability:**

- Work at all three gaits, appropriate for the level of the rider. At Training – First Level, canter is not required. At Second Level, canter is required, if safe and appropriate to the level of the rider.
- Work without stirrups is encouraged.
- At Training – First Level, the emphasis should be placed on the rider's balance and alignment, using basic exercises from the USDF Lungeing Manual.
- At Second Level, the rider's seat and position should be further developed, using the full spectrum of – but necessarily limited to - the exercises in the USDF Lungeing Manual.

- **Cool Down**

Demonstrate proper cool down techniques.

- **Final Assessment**

Examiner will ask for an analysis of the rider's progress. Be able to answer the following:

- Were you pleased with the session?
- Did you accomplish what you wanted to?
- Did the rider respond to and understand your directions?
What is the main item this rider needs to work on?

• **Score sheet for Lungeing of Rider (Seat Lesson)**

Section One: Lungeing Technique Evaluation

Evaluative Criteria is Pass/Fail. Candidate must pass every item in this section to pass this session.

- | | <u>Pass/Fail</u> |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| A. Correct fit of tack: bridle, cavesson, side reins, surcingle, saddle, boots or bandages | _____ |
| B. Safe and proper use of equipment: | |
| 1. Lunge line | _____ |
| 2. Whip | _____ |
| 3. Side reins | _____ |
| 4. Voice | _____ |
| Section One: | Pass _____ Fail _____ |

Section Two: Application and Knowledge Evaluation

Evaluative Criteria: 1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Weak, 3 = Average, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

SCORE (1-5)

- | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Accurate assessment/identification of rider’s seat and position | _____ | x 2 = | _____ |
| 2. Proper exercises to improve rider’s seat and position. Achieves appropriate success. | _____ | x 2 = | _____ |
| 3. Demonstrates a variety of exercises and is knowledgeable about their usefulness | | | _____ |
| 4. Rapport (positive, not adversarial, interacts well); professional demeanor, poise and presentation; voice, grammar, diction | | | _____ |
| 5. Organized and focused | | | _____ |
| 6. Lungeing technique and skill | | | _____ |

Total Points:	Total possible points	34
	Passing Score	28

VIII. The Teaching Exam

Purpose

To determine if candidate can:

1. Accurately assess horse/rider strengths and weaknesses.
2. Choose appropriate exercises that demonstrate knowledge of theory.
3. Communicate effectively and in depth in relation to the training scale.
4. Organize lesson in logical, progressive manner.
5. Make improvements with the horse/rider combination in available time.

Format

Training – First Level Candidates will teach two 45 – minute private lessons. The topics may be assigned by the examiner or selected by the candidate at the discretion of the examiner.

Second Level Candidates will teach two 45-minute private lessons. The topics may be assigned by the examiner or selected by the candidate at the discretion of the examiner.

Third through Fourth Level Candidates will teach two 45-minute private lessons; one lesson will be taught with a horse in a snaffle bridle and one lesson will be taught with a horse in the double bridle. The topics may be assigned by the examiner or selected by the candidate at the discretion of the examiner.

- **Tack Check/Introductions with Student:**

Find the rider in the stable or warm-up ring and make introductions. Get a basic history of rider and horse and include it in the analysis. Check the tack and make any necessary changes. If the rider does not want to change the equipment, or equipment is not available, explain this to the examiner. Make sure the rider wears an ASTM approved helmet. **Do not school the rider before the session begins with examiner.** The rider should warm up his/her horse by themselves with candidate observing. If, while in the warm-up area, the horse is discovered to be unsound, unsafe or unsuitable talk to the local organizer and a new horse will be arranged

- **Warm-up**

When it is time to enter the ring, the examiner may ask the candidate to immediately give the tack report or may ask that the candidate warms up the horse/rider. In the warm-up, this is a chance to quickly assess the rider and horse according to the Pyramid of Training. Work all three gaits in both directions.

- **Assessment**

The examiner will ask for an initial assessment of the horse. Include the following:

- History: age, sex, breed, past training history, current schooling, showing experience, soundness history, level of fitness, and temperament.
- Basic conformation: body type (rectangle), bone structure, top line and muscle conditioning, ailments, soreness.
- Current condition and overall health
- Gaits
- Evaluation according to the Training Scale. This is an important aspect of the assessment and should be in depth.

- **Determine Appropriate Exercises:**

The examiner may assign a topic, or ask the candidate to select a topic. Formulate a lesson plan including appropriate exercises to achieve the determined goals.

- **Presentation of Lesson**

Organization and focus are very important. Formulate a specific plan and build the lesson around it, allocating the limited time available to each part of the lesson. Explain the benefits of the exercise, explain what the aids are, ask for questions, and then do the exercise. Introduce the exercise in a progressive manner. When working an exercise remember to address rider's seat and position. The examiners don't expect or appreciate a lengthy discourse on the history and philosophy of dressage, but they do want the candidate to create thinking, feeling riders who understand theory relative to the Pyramid of Training, rather than just respond to directions.

A common problem is that the examiners cannot hear the candidate. Stand near the examiner and project your voice to the student. When you call the student in for a discussion, bring them over to the examiner so they can hear.

For Third through Fourth Level, the questions are true/false, multiple choice and several essay type questions.

X. Verbal Exam

This exam is designed to ensure that the candidate has sufficient depth of knowledge regarding dressage theory and has the ability to communicate effectively.

Candidates will be in small groups of three to four people. The first question will be directed to the first candidate for a response. The other candidates will be asked to support, disagree, or add to the response of the first candidate. The next question will be directed to the next candidate.

Questions may include group lessons, tack and biting, dressage movements and their aids and purpose; the Pyramid of Training, dealing with various training problems with horses. At Third through Fourth Level, additional questions may include use of the double bridle, methods for teaching/training movements at 4th level.

XI. First Aid Certification

American Red Cross first aid certification or its equivalent is required (Basic First Aid includes first aid plus adult CPR). Please submit a copy of your first aid certificate to USDF with your testing application. Applicants who fail to submit a copy of first aid certification will not be accepted.

XII. Reading Material

For a current list of required, recommended and suggested reading materials, visit the USDF website at www.usdf.org or contact the Instructor/Trainer Program Liaison at 859-971-2277 or instructorcertification@usdf.org.

XIII. Fees

Applications must be submitted to the USDF Office eight weeks prior to the testing date. Do not send checks with applications. Fees are due upon notification of acceptance.

Certified Instructor/Trainer Training-First Level	\$600.00
Certified Instructor/Trainer; Second Level	\$600.00
Certified Instructor/Trainer Third-Fourth Level	\$500.00

Retest Fees

Training – First Level

Riding	\$70.00
Lunging of Horse	\$70.00
Lunging of Rider	\$70.00
Teaching (2 sections)	\$140.00
Written Test	\$70.00
Verbal Test	\$70.00

Second Level

Riding (2 sections)	\$140.00
Lunging of Rider	\$70.00
Teaching (2 sections)	\$140.00
Written Test	\$70.00
Verbal Test	\$70.00

Third-Fourth Level

Riding (2 Sections)	\$170.00
Teaching (2 Sections)	\$170.00
Written Test	\$85.00
Verbal Test	\$85.00

Fees do not include meals, lodging, transportation, stabling or other facility-related costs. ***THERE MAY BE ADDITIONAL FEES CHARGED BY THE ORGANIZER OR HOST GMO/REGION TO COVER COST OF STABLING, FACILITY ETC.*** Candidates will be notified in advanced of any additional fees required. These fees will be due to the local organizer or GMO/Region upon arrival at the test.

For other questions or information regarding the USDF Instructor/Trainer Program and Testings, please contact the Instructor/Trainer Committee Liaison at 859-971-2277 or email instructorcertification@usdf.org.