

National Fire Academy Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

Course: **Special Operations Program Management (R0254)**

Curriculum: Hazardous Materials

This course is about all the unique issues surrounding the management of a special operations program. It is not an on-scene operations course. It relates all the different components that may be involved in the program and the means to identify and justify the needed components through a communitywide risk-based analysis. The course walks through conducting a risk analysis and identifying threats, hazards, vulnerabilities and likelihood including historical data analysis. This process leads to a picture that will enable the program manager to understand and justify the needs of the community and the resources and assets necessary to fulfill those needs on a local, regional, or statewide basis.

The course examines the ability of the organization and its culture to develop and sustain the various resources (“teams”) that may be necessary within the special operations program. Students examine the influences of the larger organization as well as the community on team(s) and program dynamics. We explore these influences using the illustration of a “spider web” and its delicate yet elastic nature to represent all the unique influences that the manager needs to balance in order to keep the “spider web” from breaking, with the program manager at the center surrounded by all the influences that impact the program and pull on the web and require a response in order to keep the program in balance. We walk through all of the unique internal and external influences to ensure an understanding of the interactions necessary. We discuss the current standard of care for the diverse services that may be delivered within the program to provide the customer with the best possible service and to limit exposure to liability as well as ensure worker health and safety. We discuss emergency operations plans and standard operating procedures for the various disciplines. Throughout the course, the groups perform a needs/gap analysis using a fictitious city and deliver, as the culminating activity, a presentation to the class on the findings, which identify and justify the solutions.

Criteria for Contract Instructor Selection

All new contract instructors shall be evaluated in three consecutive course deliveries in accordance with the National Fire Academy’s (NFA’s) Contract Instructor Evaluation program. Existing contract instructors are subject to evaluation in accordance with this program.

1. Academic Requirement

- a. It is preferred that the candidate possess a master’s degree from an institution that is accredited in fire science, fire protection, public administration, human resource management or other content related area, and documented completion of an instructional methodology course. It is required that the candidate possess a bachelor’s degree in content related area and documented completion of an instructional methodology course or appropriate combination of education, training and experience.

- b. International Fire Service Accreditation Congress or Professional Qualifications Board Fire Service Instructor II certification is recommended.
- c. Course attendance or attendance as a contract instructor trainee upon preliminary approval of the application.

2. Instructional Experience

- a. Documented ability to explain management and administrative concepts, theory and application as well as technical science topics related to special operations to a diverse student population with a broad range of training and experience in a student center learning environment.
- b. Ability to instruct courses or materials similar to the course content, at the community college, state or regional level, demonstrated by documentation of experience and a copy of at least three student or supervisor evaluations of instructional ability from courses taught with similar content.

3. Documented Knowledge and Experience in the Subject Area

- a. Serving or have served as a supervisor/manager of a special operations program. Experience must be supported by documentation and should indicate significant supervisory/managerial responsibility for the development, deployment, and sustainment of special operations resources.
- b. Supervisory/Managerial experience with technician level certification in a special operations discipline supported by documentation.
- c. Current knowledge of the standard of care affecting hazardous materials response including ongoing preparedness initiatives, standards development, and technological advances as they relate to responder health and safety.
- d. Practical experience in the use of desktop and laptop computers in an instructional environment.

4. Additional Submittals

- a. For one subject or course related to the subject matter, provide a 12- to 18-minute video or digital video disk demonstrating your instructional style. This video will be used to evaluate your teaching style in a student-centric adult learning environment, **or** attend the course “Special Operations Program Management” and successfully instruct/facilitate a component of the course that is designated and evaluated by the Training Specialist, Instructional Systems Specialist, or NFA Manager.

- b. Submission of a written essay not to exceed 500 words explaining how the instructor candidate has effected successful organizational change within the fire/ Emergency Medical Services field or related discipline.

5. Continuing Practice or Education

Ability to maintain currency in the field and the specific course by:

- a. teaching a similar course at a training academy, college or university;
- b. taking a similar course within the last five years;
- c. teaching the course at the NFA or in the field;
- d. writing and researching a paper or article related to the course topic for at least one of the fire service or related disciplines' trade journals within the last two years; or
- e. current certification as a Certified Safety Professional or Certified Hazardous Materials manager or other associated certifications requiring currency.

Failure to provide approved documentation of ongoing training or instruction may result in revocation of the contract instructor status.

6. How to Submit an Application

The following documents are required with each submission:

- a. A cover letter listing the courses you want to teach.
- b. Your résumé.
- c. Documentation that clearly addresses how you meet the instructor selection criteria for each course you are seeking to teach (e.g., academic requirement, instructional experience, knowledge and experience in the subject matter, and continuing practice or education). This document needs to be written in that order. Incomplete packages will not be processed.
- d. Three references from persons who are knowledgeable about your character as well as your teaching ability. One reference letter should be from the department or agency head in your organization or certifying organization.
- e. Include a current email address so we can communicate more efficiently with you.

Application package(s) must be submitted to:

National Fire Academy
fema-nfainstructorapp@fema.dhs.gov