



TRAINING VERSUS LICENSE VERSUS CERTIFICATION: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? VOLUME 4, 2015A(2 CEC'S)

By C. H. Krafft

In today's climate in the fitness industry it is getting harder and harder to tell the difference between certifications, trainings, and licenses and people use the term certification when the really mean license or training. Some certifications are really trainings and some with issue a "certificate of training" which people confuse as a certification and sometimes they will call themselves a certification when they are not.

This is pushing the industry to create another level that will determine which are certifications and of course charge a fee that will further increase the cost of certifications and workshops. In a nutshell here are the differences.

Training—A course you pay to attend that gives you information to improve your knowledge in the field. There are no tests, no reoccurring fees, no requirements to follow a certain protocol or choreography.

License—A course you pay to take to be able to learn a company's choreography or class structure that you are required to use in order to be able to use their trademarked name for the class type. Some have a practical component that you are tested on, others do not. There is usually a reoccurring fee monthly, quarterly, or annual to maintain the license but you get new music and choreography for the fee. Sometimes you are required to have a certification or

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Special points of interest:

- * Changes in member benefits for 2016 and the new form.
- * One shorter articles for 1 CEC.

COMPANY UPDATES

Return of AEA CEC's in 2016!!!

AEA CEC's have been applied for and approved for 2016 courses. AFAA is now under NASM and the costs tripled for carrying CEC's We will not be pursuing AFAA CEC's at this time.

News letter format change.

This is the last newsletter in the old format. The new choreography notes with have 2 full classes per quarter. All of the old CEC article are available on

the website. Any of the can be used for CEC's as long as you do not repeat which ones you use. All of the ones you complete are stored in your folder.

File purging.

Since we required that if you have been expired by more than 6 years you have to repeat the certification, the physical folders for anyone not active or expired by more than 6 years have been and will be eliminated.

ANNIVERSARY!

We are celebrating our 20th anniversary for providing certifications and workshops. Thank you all for your support!

to retake the license every couple of years. No continuing education is required. Some organizations provide optional education and courses to make the instructors better (Zumba®, LesMills®, and SilverSneakers® all provide optional education). This is because they know that some instructors want the education, but just don't want to take a test. It also helps them for liability reasons. They are providing all of the information, but it is up to the instructor to take advantage of it.

Just remember that the instructor must follow the rules of the license. It is more like a contract. You are not tested on or required to show any knowledge on exercise science or for modifications for special populations/injuries. You are required to teach the format as the licensing agency prescribes it to be taught. If you do not follow their protocol you could lose the license or be sued.

Certification-A course you take to learn the fundamentals on how to work with different populations and teach classes. It should have a testing component preferably written and practical. You have to pass the tests to show that you are proficient enough to create your own classes or routines given the basic guidelines from exercise science. You are tested on when certain exercises are inappropriate for a client or class and your understanding of how the body works during exercise. You should have to study ahead of time and prepare in order to be able to pass. If you can walk in with no prior prep work and pass their testing in a few hours it is really not a certification.

Why the differences?

Making Money versus Standards or Quantity versus Quality.

Most people hate taking tests of any kind or putting in the time to prepare for a test. Some have good reasons.

- They want to be able to either help out or sub for a favorite instructor, but are not considering teaching on a regular basis.
- They are not good test takers or may have disabilities and they do not want to have to ask for special testing conditions.
- They haven't taken a test in years and are afraid of failure or have severe test anxiety.

Licenses offer the option to teach specified formats without the test component. For some agencies, this can attract more people to take the license. Some will never teach, but will pay to take the license to say they are "certified" Zumba® has made a lot of money on licensed instructors who never teach but want the clothes discount or the prestige of saying they are Zumba® certified. Zumba® does not call their trainings certifications, they call it a license. They recommend their instructors obtain primary certifications from other organizations. Not many do.

TRAININGS

Trainings fall into 2 basic categories.

The first are workshops/trainings the are usually for already certified instructors, but anyone can attend them to gain knowledge. Some managers will take the trainings to know what to look for in instructors they are auditioning. There are no tests with trainings, but there may be continuing education units associated with them.

The second type try to imply that they are certifications. They may issue "A certificate of completion", "A certificate of training", or "A training certificate". If it doesn't have any kind of testing or doesn't requires any preparation time, it is not a certification. They may call themselves a certification, but the industry does not recognize them. Some may even have a short written test that they give you the answers to either ahead of time or while you are taking the test. Some have an open book test where you already have the answers. Others give you a take home test where you just look up the answers in the handouts or book. Some of the on-line certifications fall into this category. They are un-proctored and open-book. This type of testing is not requiring understanding or memorization, it is finding the answer in a book or handout. Studies show that the retention or understanding with this type of test if minimal. On a note there are some on-line certifications that are very difficult for the written test and may require someone to do it closed book and a third party facility, but still do not have a practical.

LICENSES

Licenses fall into 2 basic categories.

The first category teaches a structure that you must follow. Some require that you have a primary certification and then you can take their license to teach their format. This may not have a specific choreography, but it does have a specific structure. SilverSneakers® is this type of license. They require a primary certification and they then have relatively inexpensive license training that you must retake every 4 years and you may be evaluated by one of their representatives to make sure you are following the rules that they have laid out. They make their money from the health insurance savings by expanding the SilverSneakers® classes across the country. They want instructors that have a certification for liability reasons and because they are working with seniors that may have special issues the instructor will have to evaluate and possibly give modifications to individuals.

Zumba® licenses also teach a structure, but do not require a primary certification. They provide you with optional choreography, but you can develop your own as long as it follow the structure. The required fee to maintain the license and it is one of the most expensive \$35/month.... Forever....If you drop the fee you must pay redo your original Zumba® and pay to redo all specialty licenses you may have done before. You do get music every month and choreography every other month for your \$35. NIA® has a similar and more expensive at \$500/year and you receive far less music and choreography and you must you're their choreography unless you are a black belt level instructor. On the bright side there is no testing of any kind for this type of license. The assumption is that if the instructor works hard to perform the structure and has a great personality, people will come to their classes. If the instructor doesn't put in the work, the people will not come to their classes. Everything is on the instructor to make their classes work.

The second type of license provide instructors with choreography and music that they must buy and use. The theory is that the organization is providing safe format that the instructor doesn't have to think about. LesMills® and Waves-n-Motion®, Jazzercise®, NIA® are these types of licenses. It assumed that the patrons attending the class are the ones that are appropriate for that level and that if they cannot "keep up" they will not come back to the class. This can be an issue if the patron if physically not up for the class or has conditions where that type of work-out can injury them and they get injured. It is assumed that it is the patron's fault since the format is specified. For example if the class calls for overhead shoulder presses and the patron has a shoulder injury where they are not supposed to lift overhead, they should not take that class because there are no options given for the shoulder exercise except to sit it out.

For the instructor, you don't have to spend the time studying muscle groups, coming up with your own routines or choosing music. However, you do have to memorize routines. Sometimes you are tested on your ability to present the given routines which may or may not be rigorous. That depends on the organization. The hidden downfall for this type of license is that it often more expensive than certification and since you don't get paid for the time to memorize the choreography so the effective pay is a lot lower. You are also paying a lot more for the music and choreography than the certified instructor pays for trainings. The difference is that it is a little money and time every month or two that can add up to a lot more than a certification overtime. Also you are limited to their music and routines and how often you get new releases. You could be stuck with the same routine for 3 months with no option to vary it. Some facilities and clientele want consistency from instructor to instructor. Licenses are great for creating more consistency from class to class and instructor to instructor. You know that if you go to this type of class you will get the same thing no matter where you are in the country.

Some facilities will pay instructors with expensive licenses a premium rate to help them pay for the license if the license is one they want to offer.

CERTIFICATIONS

There are 4 basic types of certifications.

The first type requires both a written and practical test for someone who wants to be a fitness instructor. These are some of the harder certifications. AFAA, AEA, and A-PAI are these type of certifications. They require not only an understanding of exercise science and class structure, but proven competency that the potential instructor can actually construct and lead a class with the music. They will require continuing education to maintain the certification to make sure the instructors keep up with the changes in the industry.

The second type has only a written exam and no practical. ACE is this type of certification. The written test is closed book and very difficult, but there is no practical. The instructor will have a lot of head knowledge, but may or may not be able to construct and lead a class or work with music. This type of certification also requires continuing education to maintain the certification to make sure the instructors keep up with the changes in the industry.

The third type has a written and may have a practical, but no continuing education. You are certified for life. Many instructors with this type of certification often forget principles learned in their original certification, because they never have to review any information. They may continue to use exercises that the industry has deemed contraindicated after their original certification.

The fourth type has a written and may have a practical, and requires you to repeat the same certification every 2-3 years. Arthritis foundation and AAAI have these types of certifications. The instructor pays to sit through the same information over and over again.

Certifications can be a lot less expensive than licenses, but you have to buy your own music and come up with your own routines. This allows for more creativity and individual expression, but then there can be a lot of variability in how different instructors teach the same format. It can provide for more variety, but also more variability in consistency of instruction.

CONCLUSIONS

There are places for certifications, licenses, and trainings. The problem is not confusing them and understanding what training and knowledge is required of the instructor and the purpose of the class type. Let's put the summary in a table for consideration.

<i>Type</i>	<i>Expense</i>	<i>Choreography/ Structure given</i>	<i>Music</i>	<i>Ability to Handle Special Populations a Class</i>	<i>Ability to Lead</i>	<i>Continuing Education</i>	<i>Testing</i>
Training/ Workshop	Low	Structure	None	Possibly	Possibly	Counts As CEC	None
Training/ Certificate	Moderate	Structure	None	Possibly	Possibly	May Count	None/Open Book
License/ Primary Required	Moderate	Structure	None	Possibly	Yes	Counts as CEC Optional Education	Practical possible
License/ No Primary	High	Choreography	Supplied	No	Possibly	May Count as CEC Optional Education	Practical possible
Certification Type 1	Moderate	Instructor Supplied	Instructor Supplied	Yes	Yes	Required	Written/Practical
Certification Type 2	Moderate	Instructor Supplied	Instructor Supplied	Yes	No	Required	Written
Certification Type 3 and 4	Low	Instructor Supplied	Instructor Supplied	Yes	No /Repeat Cert.	None	Written / Possible Practical

CEC Article 4, 2015 Questions (2 CEC's) - C. H. Krafft

Submit answers with \$15. Passing score is 80%. Checks payable to A-PAI, 547 WCR 18, Longmont, CO 80504.

1. T/F All certifications require continuing education.
2. T/F All licenses provide choreography and music to the instructor.
3. What advantage does a certified instructor have over a licensed instructor when handling patrons with special conditions in their class?
4. Why don't licensed instructor learning choreography have to understand safety or exercise science?
5. Explain three advantages of choreography based licenses?
6. Explain three advantages of certification based classes?

7. Why can licenses end up being more expensive than certifications?

8. Who can take training/workshop classes? Why would someone not certified take these classes?

9. What are 2 reasons do license organizations offer optional continuing education?

10. Why is it important for the distinction between trainings, certifications, and licenses be known?



Upcoming 2016 Calendar— In Progress

March 5 Ballwin, MO— Progressive Resistance Toning, Deep at Any Depth, and Straight Up High Intensity Workshops- Meramac Bluffs Lutheran Senior Services

April 29-May 1, Lakewood, CO—Core Water Cert. Nothing but Noodles, Aquatic Intervals and Circuits, Continuous Choreography, and Creative Warm-ups Workshop Carmody Recreation Center

July Longmont, CO—Water Cert and Workshops to be determined. Longmont Recreation Center