

### **3-Tier Classification System for Offering Certification Courses for Field Delivery**

In response to an interest in additional Alabama Fire College (AFC) certification courses in field locations, new policy has been approved by the Commission to inform Alabama fire departments about the full opportunity for offering an expanded list of extension courses away from Tuscaloosa.

Certification courses vary in their requirements for being conducted away from the AFC facilities. One example is the Rescue Technician: Structural Collapse certification course that uses specialized tools, extensive expendable supplies, and props that are readily available at the AFC headquarters but may or may not be available elsewhere in the state.

In order to address the differences in required equipment, supplies, facility props and classrooms, and instructor qualification, additional certification courses will be available for approval for field delivery according to a three-tier classification system. Each tier has a different set of requirements for approval for field delivery.

#### **Tier I Courses**

The following AFC certification courses may be approved for extension delivery with a **qualified instructor selected by the host fire department or organization and approved by the AFC**. A qualified instructor must, at a minimum, hold Alabama Pro Board-accredited certification as Fire Instructor I level **plus** prior certification for the course level to be taught. The forms required to host a Tier I course can be found at [http://www.alabamafirecollege.net/res\\_forms\\_index.asp](http://www.alabamafirecollege.net/res_forms_index.asp). The host agency is responsible for ensuring that all requirements set forth by the AFC are observed.

#### **Tier I List**

- Apparatus Operator: Aerial
- Apparatus Operator: Pumper
- Certified Volunteer Fire Fighter
- Fire Department Safety Officer
- Fire Fighter II
- Fire Inspector I
- Fire Inspector II
- Fire Instructor I
- Fire Instructor II
- Fire Officer I
- Fire Officer II
- Hazardous Materials Awareness & Operations
- Public Fire and Life Safety Educator I/II

## Tier II Courses

The following AFC certification courses may be approved for extension delivery with a **qualified instructor select by the host fire department or organization and approved by the AFC, plus special facility requirements.** Courses taught away from the AFC facility are not eligible for awarding of college credit.

In addition, these courses have content, safety factors, and/or equipment and facility requirements beyond those in Tier I courses. Instructor requirements and facility requirements are higher for Tier II courses than Tier I courses.

**Instructor requirements:** The lead instructor must be certified by the AFC as Instructor II level. The lead instructor must be certified at one level higher than the course to be taught, if such level exists. If a higher level does not exist, the lead instructor must be certified at the subject and level to be taught.

The lead instructor must attend a required Instructor Awareness course that will be offered in Tuscaloosa and at convenient locations throughout Alabama. Prior to teaching a Tier II certification course for field delivery, the lead instructor must have taught the course previously at the AFC as a lead instructor or assistant instructor. Any assistant instructor must have a minimum certification of Fire Instructor I and certification at the level to be taught.

For potential lead instructors, the AFC will provide opportunities to meet the requirements for attending an Instructor Awareness course and for meeting the requirement for teaching experience as an assistant instructor.

**Facility requirements:** The AFC staff must conduct a site visit to inspect and approve any site requesting approval for field delivery of any Tier II course. The site visit inspection is required to verify availability of the equipment, supplies, and props needed to conduct any Tier II course safely.

Equipment used for teaching any Tier II course must be designated in writing to be reserved for training during the course and not subject to emergency call and response. If specialized equipment required for a Tier II course is removed for non-instructional fire department use during a Tier II certification course, the AFC must be notified and the course must be terminated.

A safety plan must be developed and submitted to the AFC along with the usual request for course approval. The safety plan must include an analysis of the safety risk of the course and intended mitigations for each risk. Host departments must document their agreement to have a designated Safety Officer (provide the SO name) and on-site EMS (with ALS equipment preferred).

**Fees:** No tuition or fee is required by the AFC for field delivery of Tier II certification courses to in-state students (see definition of in-state student). **Out-of-state students must pre-register with the AFC Registrar and pay out-of-state tuition and fees in advance.**

Failure of any agency to adhere to the state requirements will result in non-approval for subsequent courses.

### **Tier II List**

- Fire Investigator
- Hazardous Materials Technician
- Public Safety Telecommunicator I/II
- Rescue Technician: Confined Space
- Rescue Technician: Rope
- Rescue Technician: Trench
- Structural Collapse Awareness and Operations (non-certification)
- Introduction to Technical Rescue
- Fire Fighter I/II

### **Tier III Courses**

The following AFC certification courses will be **available only through special arrangements with Fire Programs staff in Tuscaloosa**. This restriction is due to circumstances varying according to course content, but may include additional instructor requirements, extensive safety risks, liability concerns, college credit considerations, and other factors evaluated by the AFC. When Tier III courses are approved for extension delivery, the tuition and fee structure will be the same as for the course delivered at the AFC. Tier III courses must have instructors selected by the AFC staff.

### **Tier III List**

- Airport Fire Fighter
- Fire Inspector III
- Fire Instructor III
- Fire Officer III
- Fire Officer IV
- Rescue Technician: Structural Collapse
- Rescue Technician: Surface Water
- Rescue Technician: Vehicle and Machinery Extrication
- Smoke Diver (non-certification)
- Fire Fighter I/II (Bridge)