Lake Erie College Assessment Planning

School of Equine Studies

Assessment of the Teacher Trainer Major, October 2012

Students in Equine Studies take experiential laboratory-based courses in riding to provide a basic level of expertise in English riding for the Equine Entrepreneur Major and Facility Management Major. Students majoring in Teacher Trainer (TT) are expected to develop a significantly higher level of expertise in riding skills in several disciplines. The goals of the TT Major include producing riding instructors who are well rounded in several disciplines of riding, producing riders able to show and compete at higher levels of competition, and producing riding trainers and instructors capable of teaching a wide variety of students both on the flat and over fences.

Rationale for Selection

The sequence of Riding Classes was selected for assessment and review. Over the years, it had become increasingly apparent that students were at times progressing through the courses with inadequate preparation for specific courses and levels of riding abilities expected of them. To gain the required level of expertise a specific set of criteria were required to enable students to progress from one class to another, and a “gatekeeper” system was needed to ensure that students entering the highest two tiers of riding courses were adequately prepared for success, mastery of equestrian skills required in those classes, and possessed the skills necessary to perform safely on the horses and at the expected skills levels of those courses.

Measures Used

Criteria were selected as criteria for advancement through the riding course levels, and as measures of accomplishment of skill sets that would enable riders to safely and effectively progress up throughout the course sequences. A new sequence of course progression was developed. See Equine Studies Riding Course Sequence attached. This sequence of courses was put into use in the academic year 2010-2011.

Examples of criteria (see Criteria for Riding Class Placement form attached):

- **Balance II** covers W/T/C with emphasis on building confidence, position and skill. Introduction to lateral work and simple changes of lead, lengthening/shortening of gaits and basic dressage to a Training Level. Horses at this level present more challenge while still building confidence.

- **Riding Skills III** builds on a solid knowledge of flatwork and jumping, adding more complex lateral movements, coursework without stirrups, flying changes of lead, and
dressage up to First Level. Fences are 2’6” to 3’. Horses at this level are more advanced and require riders that are more skilled.

**Results**

The establishment of a solid well thought out course sequence and of the Riding Skills III as the “gateway” has been successful in producing riders of high skill levels working at the appropriate course level on horses that are well suited to them for safety and skill development. Riders that pass Riding Skills III with an “A”, indicating readiness for progression to more challenging work, now move on to Intro to Hunter, Intro to Dressage, Intro to Eventing and Intro to Stadium, and must complete those courses before moving onto Hunter I, Dressage I, Eventing I, and Stadium I.

Equine TT remains the most popular major in Equine Studies, with enrollment of 47-48 majors in 2010, 2011 and 2012. Enrollment in riding classes is high, with a total of 26 students enrolled in Riding Skills III classes in 2011. Some enrollments in these classes may be students repeating this course, having to receive an “A” to progress further in their coursework.

**Improvements still needed**

Although clear criteria have been established for riding levels expected for proficiency in each class as well as for proficiency in the capstone courses of Hunter I, Dressage I, Eventing I and Stadium I, the very nature of the riding disciplines involves subjective assessment of rider abilities and performance. Further development of curriculum maps specifying more detailed performance criteria would be useful. In addition, movement towards appropriate student education to permit TT graduates passage into the Instructor, Trainer or Teacher Accreditation Courses and Continuing Education opportunities of the national affiliates of the United States Hunter Jumper Association (USHJA), United States Eventing Association, United States Dressage Federation should be considered as new curricular goals.
This form is posted on LEO and is provided to incoming freshman prior to their incoming freshman riding evaluation. The form is available to all students via LEO.

CRITERIA FOR RIDING CLASS PLACEMENT

To provide for a positive learning experience in your riding classes it is important that we assess your skills and place you in the correct class. The grading criteria for our general riding classes are listed below. EQ 104, Riding Skills 3 serves as the “gatekeeper” class to all upper level classes. Students must receive an “A” in this class in order to advance to upper level classes. Those wishing to pursue dressage only may move on to dressage classes with permission from the instructor. Please note that any Teacher/Trainer major must take at least two jumping disciplines in order to fulfill the riding requirements for that major. Teacher Trainer majors must receive an “A” in EQ 104. Additionally, those taking EQ 103 Riding Skills II must receive an “A” to proceed to EQ 104 Riding Skills III. Students in the Lake Erie College’s riding classes are required to ride a variety of horses. Even though riders may have a certain level of expertise on their own horse, we find that a true assessment of horsemanship skills is the ability to ride all types of horses. Some of our horses are green, some are being re-trained, and others are ‘pushbutton” – a representation sampling of what a riding professional would encounter in their business. We will never knowingly put a student at risk by asking them to ride a horse that is inappropriate to their skill level.

We will be assessing the following skill sets (as appropriate to the rider’s level):

1. Basic position & control
2. Quality of transitions
3. Knowledge and execution of lateral work/leg yield.
4. Simple and flying changes of lead.
5. Trot fences
6. Cantering a small course at various heights.

***NOTE: Riders who are unable to walk/trot capably and/or cannot canter comfortably will need to enroll in Balance Seat I.

Please remember that we will not ask students to complete a task with which they are unfamiliar or uncomfortable. All of these riding skills must be demonstrable on a variety of horses, so even though the students may be able to accomplish these skills on their own horse they may need work on these skills when riding a new/green/challenging horse.

General criteria for the riding classes are:

**Balance II & III** – flat work only. EQ 102, 105

Ω Balance II covers W/T/C with emphasis on building confidence position, and skill. Introduction to basic lateral work and simple changes of lead, lengthening/shortening of gaits and basic dressage to a Training level. Horses at this level present more challenge while still building confidence.

Ω Balance III incorporates builds on Balance II skills while adding more complex lateral movements, coursework without stirrups, flying changes, etc. Horses at this level are more challenging.

**Riding Skills I, II, III**: These courses incorporate jumping as well as flatwork. EQ 100, 103, 104

Ω RS I builds on the rider’s skills at W/T/C and teaches introductory jumping skills up to 2’ – 2’6”. Horses at this level are “schoolmasters.”

Ω RS II covers jumping skills at 2’6” – 2’9”. Introduction to basic lateral work and simple changes of lead along with coursework, jumping without stirrups, gymnastics, and basic dressage to a Training level. Horses at this level present more challenge while still building confidence.

Ω RS III builds on a solid knowledge of flatwork and jumping, adding more complex lateral movements, coursework without stirrups, flying changes of lead, and dressage up to First Level. Fences are 2’6” – 3’.

Horses at this level are more advanced and require riders that are more skilled.

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**EQUINE STUDIES Riding Course Sequence**

**TERMS WHEN UPPER LEVEL RIDING COURSES ARE OFFERED & RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE**

**FALL SEMESTER**
- EQ 111 – Intro to Hunters
- EQ 125 – Intro to Dressage
- EQ 130 – Intro to Stadium
- EQ 144 – Intro to Eventing
- EQ 302 – Training I

**SPRING SEMESTER**
- EQ 113 – Hunter I
- EQ 127 – Dressage I
- EQ 132 – Stadium I
- EQ 145 – Eventing I
- EQ 303 – Training II
- EQ 304 – Schooling

**Note** – Intro classes may also be offered in the Spring if enrollment warrants.

Classes may be cancelled if there is insufficient enrollment

**RECOMMENDED SEQUENCE:**

- EQ 100 Riding Skills I
  **Strong W/T/C ready to jump**

- EQ 103 Riding Skills II
  **W/T/C/ jump to 2’6”**
  Pre_req. EQ 100

- EQ 104 Riding Skills III
  **Strong W/T/C skills w/ lateral work, jump 2’9”**

- EQ 105 Balanced Seat III
  **Strong W/T/C skills w/ lateral work.**

- EQ 111 Intro Hunters
  Pre-req RSIII “A”

- EQ 113 Hunter I
  Pre-re EQ111

- EQ 113 Intro Hunters
  Pre-req RSIII “A”

- EQ 113 Hunter I
  Pre-re EQ111

- EQ 144 Intro Eventing
  Pre-req RSIII “A”

- EQ 144 Eventing I
  Pre-req EQ144

- EQ 130 Intro Stadium
  Jumping
  Pre-req RSIII “A”

- EQ 130 Intro Stadium
  Jumping
  Pre-req RSIII “A”

- EQ 132 Stadium I
  Pre-req EQ 130

- EQ 125 Intro Dressage
  Pre-req RSIII or
  Balance III “A”

- EQ 125 Intro Dressage
  Pre-req RSIII or
  Balance III “A”

- EQ 127 Dressage I
  Pre-req EQ 125