

Mentorship Guidelines

April 2021

I. Requirements for Senior and Intermediate Teacher Status

Yoga Association of Alberta (YAA) Senior and Intermediate Teachers are active teaching members of the yoga community, who train hatha yoga practitioners to become teachers of hatha yoga following the training principles of the YAA. Senior and Intermediate Teachers must be mature practitioners with long-standing experience as teachers as outlined in the applicable requirements below and must have submitted an Application for Senior or Intermediate Teacher Status, which has been approved by the Certification Committee and the Executive Board. YAA membership and recertification must remain up-to-date and in good standing for this status to remain valid. See the YAA *Recertification Guidelines*, available at the website noted above, for more details and status application forms. A summary of the requirements for Senior and Intermediate Teacher Status is as follows:

1,000-Hour Level (Senior Teacher Status):

- YAA Certification at the **500-Hour Level**
- Attendance in an **additional 500 hours** of hatha yoga classes and/or workshops taught by YAA Intermediate or Senior Teachers (or equivalent),
- **20 or more years of on-going learning and practice** of hatha yoga, including
- **10 or more years of on-going teaching experience** as a YAA Certified Teacher (or equivalent), with
- **2,000 or more hours of teaching experience.**
- Two Reference letters are also required.

750-Hour Level (Intermediate Teacher Status):

- YAA Certification at the **500-Hour Level**
- Attendance in an **additional 250 hours** of hatha yoga classes and/or workshops taught by YAA Intermediate or Senior Teachers (or equivalent),
- **10 or more years of on-going learning and practice** of hatha yoga, including
- **5 or more years of on-going teaching experience** as a YAA Certified Teacher (or equivalent), with
- **1,000 or more hours of teaching experience.**
- Two Reference letters are also required.

II. Responsibilities of Mentors

All Senior and Intermediate Teachers must be familiar with the most up-to-date version of the YAA *Teacher Training Program (TTP) Syllabus and Certification Guidelines* and be willing to communicate with the TTP & Certification Coordinator and Committee as necessary. All appendices and forms mentioned below can be found in this document which is available on the YAA website or from the Coordinator. Any problems, issues, or questions regarding the TTP, Certification, or the roles and responsibilities outlined herein, are to be directed to the Coordinator at the email address above.

Any YAA teachers recommending students for entry into the YAA-TTP are responsible for ensuring that the student has familiarity with a well-rounded basic syllabus of asana (see Asana / Pranayama Required Practices (Appendix C) of the *TTP Guidelines*) and is ready and suitable to enter into a yoga teacher training program (email may be sent directly to the Coordinator at cert@yoga.ca). If the student does not have the full required prerequisite (2 years of recent formal hatha yoga classes), he/she may be admitted with an endorsement from a YAA Senior Teacher willing to act as Mentor for the student in the program.

It is required that TTP students seek ongoing guidance and training from a YAA Senior Teacher. Each student should choose a YAA Senior Teacher with whom to apprentice (hereinafter called the Mentor) within four months of entering the program. The Mentor must also agree to formalize the relationship. Students having difficulties finding or choosing a Mentor will be given referrals by the TTP Coordinator based on student location, interests, etc.

A TTP student may also choose a YAA Intermediate Teacher with whom to take the weekly class hours component of the program if the Mentor's classes are not easily accessible, but this is optional, and at the discretion of the Mentor.

Mentors:

1. Mentors must agree to take the responsibility of having the student apprentice with them for the duration of his / her registration within the YAA-TTP. An *Apprenticeship Agreement* should be signed by all parties and returned to the YAA office. Either party may terminate the agreement by submitting a request in writing to the YAA Office.
2. The form and structure of this TTP apprenticeship will be an agreement between the Mentor and the student, and most often requires that the students attend regular classes with the Mentor as well as practicum hours. Mentors may also provide other training and workshops. All requirements are outlined in the *Summary Spreadsheet Guidelines*. These arrangements are to be made directly between the student and Mentor. Mentors set their own schedules and rates for classes, workshops and practicum hours and are responsible for collecting their own payments.
3. Mentors must agree to provide a total minimum of 10 hours of practicum which consists of regular meetings or consultations with the student on an individual basis or in a small group, with a minimum of 2 hours of Mentor supervised teaching in a classroom setting.
4. It is the responsibility of the Mentor to guide the student in choosing classes and workshops to fulfill the required hours and in how to fill out all the TTP documentation completely and correctly.
5. The *Class/Workshop Journal Pages* can be used as a tool in practicum meetings/consultations for the student to ask questions, and for the Mentor to gauge the progress and understanding of the student.
6. Mentors are responsible for reviewing all assignments in the *Assignments List* and providing constructive feedback.
7. By the end of the program, Mentors are responsible for ensuring that the student has covered the entire curriculum as outlined in the *Curriculum List* and has an introductory understanding of the constituent theory components, which are covered in the monthly Core Curriculum classes offered in Edmonton. If a student is unable to attend a particular class, it can be taken in the next two-year cycle, or else the material must be covered in a different form, at the Mentor's discretion. For example, the student may cover the material in other classes and/or workshops plus submit a more in-depth written report on the material.
8. By the end of the program, Mentors are responsible for ensuring that the student has a working understanding of the entire syllabus of *Asana / Pranayama Required Practices (Appendix C)* and that the student is able to teach them safely and effectively on their own.
9. At the discretion of the Mentor and the TTP and Certification Committee, additional hours may be required beyond the minimum requirements in any category. Note that depending on the students' interests and their course through the program, students may choose to stay in the program well beyond the minimum two-year requirement. If a TTP students are in the program for longer than 5 years, their status will be reviewed by the TTP and Certification Committee.
10. Once the student has completed all requirements, the Mentor is responsible for signing the required documentation and recommending the student for YAA Certification. Mentors should provide the following

information in the reference letter, which may be given to the student or sent directly to the Coordinator at the email above.

- A character reference for the student - how well do you know him / her and how long has the student has been involved in your classes?
- An assessment of the student's knowledge of the *Asana / Pranayama Required Practices (Appendix C)*.
- An assessment of the student's teaching capabilities. **Are you confident that this person is ready to safely and effectively conduct a class on his / her own?**
- Any comments or reservations that you think are relevant or might assist us in awarding a certificate.

11. YAA Senior Teachers may also be asked to mentor or continue mentoring YAA Certified Teachers in their preparation for Advanced Training Levels. The form and structure of any such apprenticeship will be an agreement between the two parties, and no formal process or application is required. Mentors will be asked to provide reference letters for teachers under their apprenticeship to accompany advanced status applications.

Intermediate Teachers:

1. As a designated Intermediate Teacher for a YAA-TTP student, Intermediate Teachers agree to take the responsibility of training the student in regular hatha yoga classes. This arrangement must be approved by the student's Mentor. An *Apprenticeship Agreement* should be signed by all parties and returned to the YAA office.
2. Intermediate Teachers may be asked to collaborate with the student's chosen Mentor.

III. Monthly Core Curriculum Classes

Core curriculum classes in the YAA-TTP are conducted by invited YAA Certified Senior Teachers and are held one Saturday per month, in Edmonton. The sequence of classes repeats every two years. Students may begin the program at any time during the year. See the website for the current schedule of classes.

For students who are not able to access these classes, equivalent training must be completed. Mentors should consult with the TTP Coordinator in advance for approval for equivalent training.

IV. Bi-annual Teaching Skills Workshops

The YAA organizes two weekend-long workshops per year, usually in Edmonton, conducted by invited YAA Senior Teachers. A minimum of 45 hours (3 x 15-hour workshops) is required within the students' programs. For students living outside of the Edmonton area, every effort will be made to billet them with other students or yogis in the area.

YAA Teaching Skills Workshops develop the teaching voice of each student through peer teaching and assessment. Students receive feedback from other students and the Senior Teacher leading the workshop and provide constructive feedback to their peers. Effective teaching skills are practiced and emphasized.

For students who are not able to access these classes, equivalent training must be completed. Mentors should consult with the TTP Coordinator in advance for approval for equivalent training.

V. Further Information

Please direct any questions or issues regarding the YAA-TTP, YAA Certification, or the roles and responsibilities outlined herein to the Coordinator, the YAA Office, or the YAA Executive. Contact information is listed at the top of this document.