Each individual may have a different motive for studying the martial arts. The goal for some students may be the desire to become a tournament competitor, while others aspire to seek the self-confidence that the martial arts teach. To be a “Qualified Instructor”, you must be able to teach every student the full concept of the art that you are teaching, without ignoring their individual expectations. As a qualified instructor, you must carefully and realistically organize your objectives to correspond with your teaching plan.

In a martial arts school the curriculum is vast and varied. Students may learn combat skills through sparring and self-defense, improve internal awareness and discipline through form practice and seek inner peace through meditation. In addition to these topics, there are many more subjects available that vary from school to school.

It is vitally important to “maintain a well balanced curriculum” and to “plan your classes in advance”. For example: if you plan to teach:

- Warm-up exercises
- Basic techniques
- Patterns (Forms)
- Pre-arranged sparring
- Free-sparring
- And allow time for a cool-down period

The average class is only 60 minute, how will you be able to allot enough time to thoroughly cover each topic? The “portion of time” that is allotted for each topic must be decided in advance. A good rule to follow is: “Plan your lesson and follow your plan”.

A novice instructor that does not plan his class in advance, he may start his class with warm-up exercises, and then move to a review of basic techniques, only to find that 45 minutes of his class has already passed. Even a novice instructor realizes that the remaining 15 minutes is not enough time to teach forms, pre-arranged sparring, free-sparring and allow time at the end of class for a cool-down period.

If the instructor does not plan his class, his objectives will not be realized. On the other hand, if a novice instructor allots the “same amount of time” for each of the topics without regard for the content of the lesson, his class may seem boring and monotonous to the students, resulting in poor attendance and drop-outs. Poor planning leaves the students feeling tired, unbalanced and unfocused. The “needs” of the students must take priority over the “wants” of the instructor.
There are many mitigating factors that may affect the way students absorb your instruction, such as: an upcoming tournament or promotional testing, the training environment, the student/instructor relationship, etc. A qualified instructor must be able to adapt his teaching material to meet the ever changing needs of the students.

This section of the Instructor Development Course is designed to explore some of the curriculum possibilities that are available to the qualified instructor. It is the responsibility of the instructor to implement the appropriate curriculum that meets the needs of the students and therefore, achieves the objectives of the instructor.

**Conditioning**

Martial art training requires the use of almost every muscle in the body. Therefore, it is very important to teach a complete regimen of conditioning exercises before beginning difficult class activities. Conditioning exercises perform several important functions:

- By elevating the metabolism in the body, the various physiological systems are prepared for more rigorous physical activity.

- The circulation in the body increases and the nervous system becomes more sensitive, allowing for sharper reflexes.

- The flexibility of the muscles and the range of motion for the joints increase through the use of a variety of stretching exercises.

- Primary muscle groups increase in strength, reducing the possibility of injury and allowing the students to progress naturally to even more difficult movements or techniques.

For optimal conditioning, two to three intensive work-outs per week are recommended. Days of intensive training should be alternated with days of less intensive training or rest. At least 10 - 15 minutes of warm-up is strongly recommended before engaging in sudden changes of direction in movements, techniques or physical contact activities. This is especially true for the execution of spinning or full power movements and techniques.

**There are five categories of conditioning exercises:**

- Warm-up/cool-down exercises
- Stretching exercises
- Balance exercises
- Strength exercises and
- Endurance exercises

1. **Warm-up/cool-down exercises**

   You must start and end every class with the warm-up/cool-down exercises. They are the best way to raise the body temperature, loosen joints and prepare the muscles of the body to perform martial arts movements and techniques. The oxygen and blood circulation of the body aids in lubricating joints and supplying energy to the muscles. There are two methods of warm-up/cool-down exercises:
- **Extremities to trunk:**

  When you work extremities to trunk, begin with the wrists, ankles and neck and work inward to the large joints and muscle groups of the trunk

- **Trunk to extremities:**

  When you work trunk to extremities, begin with the large joints and muscle groups of the trunk and work outward to the wrists, ankles and neck

Listed below are a few examples of warm-up/cool-down exercises:

- Jumping jacks
- Neck rotation
- Shoulder rotation
- Hip rotation
- Knee rotation
- Trunk twisting (side to side)
- Upper body rotation
- Standing toe touch
- Bridge
- Etc.

2. **Stretching exercises**

  Stretching exercises increase the “range of motion” of the body by increasing flexibility and elasticity in the muscles. Always begin with a light stretch and then proceed to a full stretch when the muscles are fully warmed-up. When planning stretching exercises, group them to avoid unnecessary movement, for example:

  - Standing stretching exercises
  - Seated stretching exercises
  - Prone stretching exercises

  Teach students to stretch to an “uncomfortable” but not to a painful point. Discomfort indicates progress while pain indicates a breakdown in muscle tissue and results in poor muscle quality. Also avoid “ballistic” stretching and “over-stretching” caused by putting too much weight on the extended muscle.

Listed below are a few examples of stretching exercises:

- Finger stretching (bend backward)
- Neck stretching (side to side slowly)
- Chest expansion
- Trunk stretching (side to side)
- Trunk stretching (front to back)
- Palms to the floor stretching (standing)
- Knee press stretching
- Hurdler’s stretching
- Front split stretching
3. **Balance exercises**

Balance exercises improve spatial awareness and posture, as well as stability. All three attributes are important for strong offensive and defensive capabilities in sparring and self-defense. Practice balance exercises slowly and with attention to the goal of the movement. For jumping exercises, focus on maintaining a good posture in the air and landing with balance and control.

Listed below are a few examples of balance exercises:

- Jumping rope
- Hopping on one leg
- 360 degree jump and spin
- Jump and touch knees to the chest
- Jump and touch toes with the legs extended
- Jump and touch toes behind the body
- Jump over a moving object

4. **Strength exercises**

Strength exercises focus on the development of specific muscles to improve skills. Increases in strength training should be gradual and progressive. Consistent training is the key to improvement.

Listed below are a few examples of strength exercises:

- Push-ups
- Sit-ups
- Crunches
- Leg lifts
- Hopping in a squatted position
- Isometric exercises

5. **Endurance exercises**

Endurance exercises raise the respiration, heart rate and increases lung capacity. Endurance exercises should “mobilize” muscles to their tiring point “repetitively” to increase the muscle’s capacity for performance. There are two types of endurance training methods:
**Aerobic:**

Aerobic exercises literally means “with oxygen”. This type of exercise relies on the body’s continuous intake of oxygen to supply energy to the muscles. An example of aerobic endurance training is distance running.

**Anaerobic:**

Anaerobic exercises are those that require “more oxygen” than the body is able to take in through breathing; they rely on energy stored in the body. An example of anaerobic endurance training is interval training.

You can determine the type of exercise you are doing by your breathing. If you can carry on a normal conversation during the endurance exercise, you are doing an aerobic exercise. If your breathing is “labored” and continues to be long after you finish exercising, you are doing anaerobic exercise. When you are teaching children, keep in mind that they have a very limited anaerobic capacity until they begin to mature physically, at the onset of puberty.

When the body is well conditioned, the coordination of mind and body will increase and the combined physical and mental response to a given situation will be quickened.

**Self-Defense**

We are living in a highly civilized environment compared to any other period in history. We have many laws to protect ourselves and preserve the order of society. Unfortunately, crime rates are soaring higher every day. Not a single day passes without violence committed against innocent people. Without a perfect solution to crime, everyone needs a means of defense to protect himself and his loved ones. As a member of society, every person has a right to protection from an unlawful attacker.

For this purpose, many people turn to the martial arts. As a martial arts instructor, you are responsible for giving these people the ability to keep themselves safe and to live without fear. You can do this by teaching them self-defense skills and the knowledge of “how and when” to use them.

There are many self-defense techniques that can be applied in every situation. Analyze the needs of each student to determine which self-defense techniques are best suited for his or her size, strength, age and ability. For beginners, teach simple but effective self-defense techniques that are easy to remember and can apply to a variety of situations.

Beginners are looking for “realism”. They will go home and try to use these self-defense techniques on their friends and relatives to see if they really work. Remind them of the serious damage that self-defense techniques can cause and the proper response to a given situation.

At the intermediate stage, begin teaching joint locks, choke holds, take-downs and throws. Teach these skills slowly and progressively. Before you teach throwing techniques, it is necessary to teach the correct method of falling, to prevent back and neck injuries. Also caution students to stop applying pressure to a joint as soon as their partner gives the signal to stop. With careful supervision, your students will enjoy learning complex, useful self-defense techniques.
Listed below are the five basic “principles of self-defense” and five points to remember for the “psychology of self-defense”:

**Principles of self-defense:**

- Recognize potentially dangerous situations
- Avoid dangerous situations, this is the best method of self-defense
- Escape if you can, using any method
- If your attacker wants material possessions, give them to him do not risk your life for money or possessions
- Defend yourself as a last resort, commit yourself - totally, decisively, powerfully and quickly

**Psychology of self-defense:**

- Calm down and relax, you are still alive
- Try to communicate with your attacker as a person
- Do not aggravate the attacker
- Try to make the attacker relax and off-guard, then defend yourself when your attacker least expects it
- Apply all means possible, without hesitation to defend your life

Most importantly, in teaching self-defense, emphasize that none of the skills learned in class should be used in a self-defense situation without a valid reason. Inform the student of the laws in your state regarding the use of force in a self-defense situation.

**Techniques**

In teaching basic movements and techniques to beginners, start with an explanation of how the parts of the human body are used to create the “mechanics of the movement or technique” and “explain the purpose” as well. Explain to the beginner students that the movement or technique may be used “defensively” or “offensively”. Then teach the beginner students specifically how to use each section of the body, defensively and offensively, such as:

- (low) Front snap kick
- (middle) Punch
- (high) Rising block

The basic movements of most martial art styles include:

- Hand techniques
- Foot techniques
- Blocking techniques
- And the combination of all three
Footwork and body shifting can be combined with these fundamentals for realistic applications. There are five types of primary “body shifting” methods:

- Forward
- Backward
- To the right
- To the left
- To an angle

At the student “advanced stage”, fundamental directional movements can be combined with lunging, jumping, hopping, skipping, turning and angular movements and techniques.

In addition to agile footwork, teach your students to always maintain correct stances and good posture. Correct stances and good posture will enable them to execute their basic movements and techniques with speed and correctness. This will also prevent your students from developing “idiosyncrasies” that telegraph their intentions before an attack.

To improve the accuracy of attacking techniques, teach the vital points of the human body. When students know where the “exact target areas” are on the body, they can execute every attack with precision. Instead of a student executing a high turning kick, middle side piercing kick and a low front snap kick, the well-trained student should use the “vital points” of the body to improve accuracy, for example, a high turning kick to the temple, a middle side piercing kick to the solar plexus and a low front snap kick to the groin. “Target visualization” will allow your students to practice in a focused manner with the intention of improving their skill level.

When you use a progressive approach to teaching fundamentals, your students will be able to measure their progress in steady, consistent manner. Basics fundamental exercises are the most important part of your curriculum. Teaching slowly and correctly is better than pouring all of your knowledge into an unprepared student. Give your students the chance to understand and develop every step correctly. If you give too much explanation, they will become overwhelmed. Explain key points and allow them to explore and discover the skill on their own. Always keep your instruction simple and to the point and you will not “run out of time” in class.

**Form preparations**

Form preparation drills are a pre-requisite for learning forms. These exercises allow the beginner student to understand the “fundamentals of forms”. The beginner student will learn how to defend and attack the different sections of the body, change directions with a blocking tool and learn to coordinate the upper and lower body as a defense and attack. Listed below are examples of form preparation drills:

- Saju-Chirugi (4-directional punch)
- Saju-Makki (4-directional block)
- Saju-Chagi (4-directional kick)

**Pattern combination drills**

Pattern combination drills should be a pre-requisite for learning patterns. These exercises are actual combination movements and techniques taken from the patterns. The purpose of implementing pattern combination drills is to allow the student to learn the pattern in “segments” and to allow the board of test examiners a chance to “critique” those segments before the actual testing pattern is performed in a promotional testing.
Patterns

In the Taekwon-Do, the performance of patterns is the most structured expression of the art. There is an ideal way of performing the Chang-Hon Patterns and it is accomplished through “consistent practice”.

- First, the student practices to perfect the sequence of the movements
- Next, the student works to implement the intrinsic attributes of the pattern including speed, power and timing
- Finally, the student strives to attain total mental and physical unity through the realization of a perfect performance; it is through this process of “mastery” that the beauty of Taekwon-Do is truly understood

Every “traditional” style of the martial arts has its own set of patterns that increase in difficulty as the student progresses. In the early days of the martial arts, when an art was being developed, patterns were the only method of passing on the “secrets” of the art from master to student. Thus, each pattern is a series of offensive and defensive movements arranged in a meaningful order for combat against imaginary opponents. The blocks, strikes, kicks and stances of each pattern are well suited to the student’s current belt level and increase in difficulty with each pattern.

Pattern practice is very important because without understanding the “art in the patterns”, it is impossible to understand the total concept of Taekwon-Do. Through the practice of pattern the student develops:

- Coordination
- Focus
- Breath control
- Balance
- Strength
- Flexibility
- Discipline
- Endurance
- Peace of mind

Every pattern, in every style of the martial arts has its own “meaning” and “character”. To master a pattern, understanding its character is as necessary as remembering the sequence of it’s movements. When teaching patterns, start by explaining the purpose of each movement and demonstrate how to perform it, “step-by-step”. Form combination drills are the best way to teach a new pattern, this allows the student to learn the pattern in segments. Once the individual movements have been learned correctly, the next step is to practice the entire pattern until the student can complete it without thought or external distraction. At this point, the student will begin to understand the intrinsic unity and meaning of the pattern.

10 tips for teaching a new pattern:

1. The ready stance should be calm and relaxed, yet full of potential energy
2. Clearly explain the sequence and diagram of the movements
3. Teach every movement slowly and precisely, be sure the students are moving in the correct direction and are placing their hands and feet in the proper position
4. Teach correct posture and eye direction for each movement
5. The execution of movements should be smooth, dynamic and decisive, the mind and body should be relaxed between movements
6. Emphasize controlled breathing and a strong explosive kiup on the correct movement
7. Demonstrate how to combine the different types of movements required for patterns, slow, fluid movements and fast explosive movements should flow smoothly into each other
8. Teach the meaning of each pattern and emphasize practicing it as if in a real combat situation
9. Allow students to practice the pattern facing in different directions
10. Do not teach the next pattern, until the student refines the current pattern

Pre-arranged sparring

Pre-arranged sparring starts at the beginner level and is a test requirement through the rank of 6th dan black belt. The purpose of teaching pre-arranged sparring is to allow the student to practice attacking and blocking techniques with an opponent in a controlled atmosphere. Pre-arranged sparring is divided into 3 major categories:

- 3-Step sparring
- 2-Step sparring
- 1-Step sparring

Semi free-sparring

Semi free-sparring is taught at the beginner level as a preparation for free-sparring. Semi free-sparring is a “controlled” sparring exercise conducted by the instructor that dictates the following safety measures:

- The distance between players “X” and “Y”
- Method of attack and defense used
- Attacking and blocking tools used
- Only one series of attack and defense motions are exchanged

Free-sparring

Normally, free-sparring starts at the intermediate level and is a test requirement through the rank of 6th Dan Black Belt. In Taekwon-Do training, there are many types of sparring, for example:

- Pre-arranged sparring
- No-contact
- Light contact
- Controlled contact
- Full contact
- Etc.

Which type of sparring you teach depends on your training background and the needs of your students. Whatever type of sparring your students will ultimately practice, always start with pre-arranged sparring and progress to no-contact sparring first. From the intermediate stage, varying degrees of contact can be introduced based on the student’s interest and skills.
Pre-arranged sparring must be taught before students are allowed to engage in free-sparring. By practicing pre-determined attacks, blocks and counter-attacks, students learn the importance of using precise controlled techniques in a sparring exercise. This will allow the beginner students to develop the attributes needed for free-sparring, such as: timing, judgment, reflexes and learning the proper free-sparring distance.

For the beginner who may be apprehensive of the aggressive nature of free-sparring, pre-arranged sparring is a safe and controlled method of introducing the concepts and strategies of free-sparring. Conversely, for the over-zealous student, pre-arranged sparring will teach control.

By the time students reach the intermediate stage, they will be ready for free-sparring. Free-sparring can be divided into two areas of strategy:

- **Offensive Attack** (initial attacking)
- **Defensive Attack** (counter-attacking)

At first it is best to teach initial attacking, because action is quicker than reaction. When initial attacking skills become quick and strong, gradually introduce the counter-attacking skills, the second half of free-sparring.

When the students reach the advanced stage and have learned to use internalized impressions for their attacks, begin teaching more complex counter-attacking skills and strategies. Counter-attacking skills are more difficult to accomplish and require good reflexes; they are more effective than initial attacking skills. One of the most difficult areas of counter-attacking skills is developing “trapping” techniques. Trapping is developed by luring the opponent into a desired action by a combination of fakes/feints and/or attacks. Most fighters feint with body language and fake with an actual technique.

### 10 tips for teaching free-sparring:

1. Always use the proper safety equipment for free-sparring
2. Always use a referee to monitor the match-up you have selected
3. Be certain “X” and “Y” players understand your sparring instructions
4. Teach “X” and “Y” players to practice their strong and weak sides equally
5. Teach each student to practice with realism and to avoid a mechanical performance
6. Teach the students to practice the mechanics of their techniques in slow motion
7. Teach the simple combinations first and advance toward the complex combinations
8. Practice techniques by emphasizing proper footwork to teach students strategy
9. Teach the importance of control with each technique
10. Teach students the proper martial arts attitude in class and they will develop the respect and integrity worthy of their rank

### Advanced self-defense

Advanced self defense starts at the Intermediate level and is a test requirement through the rank of 6th Dan Black Belt. Self-defense techniques are not only the most interesting in Tae Kwon Do, but also the most advanced. Advanced self-defense techniques are the logical application of various motions acquired from patterns, sparring and fundamental movements to be used against a sudden attack by an
armed or unarmed opponent. General Choi Hong Hi, the author of the book Tae Kwon Do, explains the significance of self-defense in the “Cycle of Tae Kwon Do”:

- **Fundamental movements** = Individual soldier’s basic training
- **Dallyon** = Maintenance of equipment
- **Patterns** = Platoon tactics
- **Sparring** = Field exercise in simulated combat conditions
- **Self-defense** = Actual combat

Advanced self-defense techniques can only be effective if the student takes the time to train under “realistic” conditions.

**Advanced self-defense is divided into four categories:**

- Defense against a sudden attack
- How to release from a grab or hold
- Take-down, throwing and falling techniques
- Defense against an armed attacker

**Supplementary training**

Supplementary training starts at the Intermediate level and is used as a teaching tool through the rank of 6th Dan Black Belt. The use of special events and training aids are strong incentives for students to deepen their knowledge and become more intensely involved in the martial arts.

**Special events may include activities such as:**

- Tournament competition
- Demonstrations
- Outdoor training
- Summer camp
- Seminars
- Etc.

**Training aids may include equipment such as:**

- Heavy bag
- Mirrors
- Stretching equipment
- Protective free-sparring gear
- Hand held focus targets
- Etc.