

Spinning Certificate Program Weavers Guild of Greater Baltimore

Dedicated to Jane Hyland
In memory of her spirit, sparkle and passion for spinning

Overview

Objectives:

The WGGB Spinning Certificate Program (SCP) is designed to give WGGB members a structured study guide and to establish standards by which they can measure their growing expertise in spinning. The Program will allow participants to demonstrate their knowledge of multiple fibers, ability to spin to specification, proficiency in use of appropriate tools, and skills in designing and completing a project.

SCP Description:

The SCP has three levels: Apprentice, Journeyman, and Masters. The Apprentice and Journeyman Levels are designed to demonstrate the spinner's knowledge and technical skills. The participant must show proficiency in multiple fiber categories and on various types of equipment. Apprentice and Journeyman participants can form study groups that support their learning experience. Other Guild study groups, the Guild library, mentoring by skilled spinners in the Guild, and classes available from the Guild and other sources will also support these efforts.

The Masters Level comprises planning and executing an independent project to produce decorative or wearable items that highlight mastery of spinning. Certification at the Apprentice and Journeyman Levels are prerequisites of the Masters Level.

Apprentice and Journeyman Levels: Fiber and Technical Skills

Participants working on the Apprentice Level will submit work on color theory and yarn measurements, and use wool, cotton, bast, synthetic, manmade and silk fibers. Work for the Journeyman Level will cover animal fibers, yarn structure, tools, design elements, yarn duplication and novelty yarns.

Masters Level: Independent Project

Participants will propose and execute an independent project focused on some aspect of spinning. The required documentation will include a statement of purpose, presentation of the inspiration for the study, and conclusions. Actual items submitted will include preliminary work and the completed work.

General Program Guidelines:

- The participants will have two years per level to complete the Apprentice, Journeyman, and Masters Levels. Participants will register for one Level at a time. Participants must reregister for each Level if the work submitted is not accepted, or if the work is not submitted within the specified two-year time frame.
- Each year, applications will be accepted by SCP Registrar no later than the October Guild meeting. The same deadline applies to reregister for any level.
- There is a \$40.00 fee to register or reregister for any level.
- The complete Program documents are available on the Guild web site.
- Study groups for participants can be formed each fall. The participants will draw up a schedule for studies and submissions, with the approval of the Chairman. The groups can assign and share research information, share fiber sources and costs, and work together to support their efforts.
- All work for rating submissions must be done independently; samples from workshops, study group sessions, or classes are not acceptable
- The submissions for each section will be labeled and documented as required. See Basic Instructions and Evaluation Criteria for details.
- Work submitted for one section may not be submitted for a subsequent section.
- Evaluations will take place in a timely manner after each submission date.
- The participants will receive feedback (positive and constructive) from the judges. Participants need a grade of 75 to pass.
- If the judges do not accept all of a candidate's items for one section, those pieces that are accepted may be resubmitted along with new items for another try at the same section.
- At the judges' discretion, applicants will be allowed to resubmit one or two skeins/folders within one month of the evaluation date to successfully complete an Apprentice or Journeyman section.
- Certificates for the Apprentice, Journeyman and Masters Levels will be awarded at the Sept. meeting.

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- Skeins: Skeins must contain 10 yards of **finished** yarn.
 - The yarn must be finished (washed, set, fulled, etc.) as it would be for the intended end use. Since fiber/yarns change at every step of the process, do not measure yarns before they have been finished.
 - Wrap the yarn gently around the measuring device and do an extra wrap or two. You can submit a little more than 10 yards, but not any less!
 - Tie the ends of the yarn together in a simple knot.
 - Tie the skein in four places with a loose figure-eight knot of fine white cord. Judges will need to spread out the strands of the skein so make sure the ties are loose.
- Swatches:
 - Swatches must be 16" square: 4" x 4" or 2" x 8" and washed or finished.
- WPI holders: Skein folders contain WPI holders of singles and plied yarns.
 - Originally DMC embroidery floss holders provided the perfect 1" wrap holder. The cut out area in the newer DMC floss holders do not always measure 1". Measure the cut out area in whatever floss holder you use and correct the opening if needed.
 - Judges like to see wrap holders for each step of the yarn creation process. You should make a holder for pre-finished and post-finished singles and plied yarns.
- Staples: It is a requirement to include a staple of the starting fiber. For example, if you started with raw fleece, you must include a staple of the raw fleece in a little baggie.
- Copyright restrictions: All SCP participants must abide by federal copyright law which prohibits use of anyone else's work without the owner's permission.
 - All quoted words, (written, published, electronically transmitted, or spoken) must be credited to the source while longer passages from these sources must include the permission of the owner.
 - All photographs or graphics are protected works.
 - Participants are urged to become familiar with copyright requirements. Good sources are:
 - Details and FAQs about copyright law: www.copyright.gov
 - "The Chicago Manual of Style – The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors and Publishers", University of Chicago Press, ISBN 0-226-10389-7. Available at your public library.
- Keep it simple: read and reread all requirements. Understand the requirement and submit just what is asked for.
 - Extra information about sheep breeds and resources doesn't tell the judge what you actually learned from it.
 - Incorporate pertinent information in your write-up and cite sources. List them in the bibliography.
 - Copies of articles and skeins, etc., that you have collected can be put with your material when the submission is returned.
- Late submissions: Any section submitted after the planned submission date (within the 2 year time frame) should be submitted at a subsequent submission date, or will be held and sent to the judges with the next round of submissions.
 - Please notify the Tracking Coordinator as early as possible so judges know when to expect the work.
 - No more than 2 submissions per participant may be submitted at a time.
 - Care must be taken to prevent a pile-up of submissions close to the end of a Level.
- Submissions structure: All submissions must be structured to follow the requirements as spelled out in the SCP documentation.
 - The requirements numbers and word description must be clearly visible on all folders, write-up sheets and evaluation sheets.
 - The information/work for each numbered requirement will be in a separate folder.
 - We suggest black folders that fold from the right with three holes on the left side.
 - As a suggestion, use Avery Mailing Labels (#5160) and the program that works with Word to generate labels.
 - Your participant number must be on the write-up sheets as well.
 - You can make up for folders early in the process (one for each numbered requirement) and work to fill them with the appropriate skein, swatch or written documentation.
 - In the case of the wool submission, this means there should be eleven folders sequenced and numbered just as the skeins, swatches and written documentation requirements are listed in the SCP document.
- How to submit work:
 - Packaging: No heavy binders please! Submissions can be placed in three ring binders after evaluation to create your own reference library.
 - Use appropriately sized rings to hold folders together.

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- Put 2 copies of the appropriate evaluation sheet in each requirement folder.
- Fill in all the information on the top of the sheet: Your participant number, the requirement number and the full word description and date.
- Delivery: Send submissions to the Tracking Coordinator.

What Judges say they like:

- Detailed comments: Judges say they really appreciate your comments about a particular fiber, skein, swatch, technique, etc.
- Don't skip in this area of your documentation.
- List the wheel you used (and why if you had a choice), the ratios, number of treadles, length and type of draw.
- Say what you liked, lessons learned, what was a challenge for you, things you did, techniques/references that helped you.
- Your comments are the only way the judges know how you did the work and what you learned.
- Really describe the intended use: This is critical.
 - When describing the end use of your yarn, give a detailed description.
 - Don't just say: "a knitted sweater", or "a woven table runner."
 - The judges won't be able to tell if what you spun is correct for the end use.
 - Pictures help (even a small one).
 - List the needle size, knitting stitches or weave structure to be used.
 - List references, knitting or weaving pattern sources.
 - Include a copy of the item directions behind your documentation sheet.
- Pictures of the equipment used, especially if you borrowed the equipment. Show you understand the equipment.
- Staples: It is a requirement to include a staple of the raw fleece, if you started with raw fleece. Although not a requirement, judges like to see a washed staple and a bit of the prepared fiber.
 - Mount samples of each fiber included in a skein with fiber lengths noted in a small baggie.
- Skeins: A preference has been expressed for skeins that do not hang out of the folder.
 - This is not a requirement but makes for a neater submission. Measure the skein on a shorter niddy niddy or find a way to loop or hold the skein. Or tie a length of fine elastic around the folder and tuck the skein into it.
 - Extra skeins can confuse judges about what you are actually submitting for evaluation.

Definitions: Please use the following definitions for clear communications.

- Inchworm: (a woolen draw). "With the hand closest to the wheel, pull some fibers an inch or two out of the supply and toward the wheel. Let go of the drafted segment and let the twist enter it...Your drafting movement should be small and quickly repeated, with all motions staying directly in front of you. The twist will enter the short, drafted lengths quickly and intermittently." The twist is not kept in front of the forward hand's fingers. See *Hands On Spinning* by Lee Raven, pg. 76. Also see pg. 204-205 in *In Sheep's Clothing* by Nola and Jane Fournier.
- Woolen spinning: the wool is drum or handcarded into a random mass with the fibers lying at different angles from each other. The fibers are of different lengths, with short pieces and noils included. Air is trapped in the yarn as it is spun using a medium or long draw. The twist enters the drafting area and the resulting yarn is fluffy, soft and light." See *Spinning Wool Beyond the Basics* by Anne Field, pg. 88. Use a drumcarder and handcards to demonstrate your skill with both.
- Long draw or double draw/extension: (a woolen draw). "Yarn is drafted quickly to an intermediate length of thinned roving with a minimal amount of twist – just enough to hold the fibers together. Then that length is drafted again between two hands as more twist is allowed to enter, until the yarn reaches its final length." See *Hands On Spinning* by Lee Raven, pg. 77.
- Point-of-contact drafting : (a woolen draw) Pinch off a section of rolag, pulling the pinched-off section back against the twist until it is the desired diameter, elongating and holding the core of air. See *The Long Draw: Drafting for Woolen Yarn*, Carol Huebscher Rhoades, *Spin-Off*, Winter 2004, pg. 74.
- Short Draw: (a worsted draw). "Prior to spinning, the wool fibers are combed into a parallel arrangement. The fibers are from long staple wools and the short fibers are removed during combing. No air enters the wool as it is spun. The spinning method is such that no twist enters the drafting area. The resulting yarn is smooth, lustrous and hard-wearing. In worsted spinning never let the twist behind the forward hand." See *Spinning Wool Beyond the Basics* by Anne Field, pg. 88. Per Lee Raven, *Hands On Spinning*, pg. 77, for a true worsted draw, "all the fiber ends are slicked down just as the twist enters that portion of the drafted fibers" for smooth and lustrous yarn.
- Spinning from the fold: "Fold the flick carded or comb fiber over the forefinger of the back hand and spin with the wool drafting out from the fold." See *Spinning Wool Beyond the Basics*, Anne Field, pg. 108. Or, the fiber is

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folded so that the point of twist enters the fiber mass at the midway point of the fiber's length. See *Spinning from the Fold*, by Carol Huebscher Rhoades, *Spin-Off*, Fall 2006, pg. 28.

- Drafting for woolen and worsted style yarn on a spindle: See *Spin-Off*, Winter 2005, pg. 30.
- Flicking: Using a bouncing motion, "hit the carder down into the tips of the staples with a flick of your wrist." See *Spinning Wool: Beyond the Basics*, Anne field, pgs.92.
- Teasing: Preparing fibers for spinning by opening and fluffing a small clump of fibers with your fingers.
- Finishing yarns: There are three main methods of wet finishing: soaking (setting twist), soaking and agitating (fulling), and drying under pressure (blocking).
 - Long fibers and fibers with less crimp tend to become denser and stronger when wet finished. These fibers and worsted preparations respond best to twist setting.
 - Short fibers regain much of their original crimp after wetting which opens the yarn and gives it a larger diameter. These fibers and woolen preparations respond best to fulling.
 - Novelty yarns can be blocked to make them manageable.

See *Wet Finishes for Yarn*, Judith MacKenzie McCuin, *Spin-Off*, Summer 2007, pg. 74.

- Yarn integrity/strength: The singles yarn has sufficient twist to hold together throughout the length of the skein.
- Uniformity/equal grist: The diameter of the yarn is the same throughout the length of the skein.
- Drafting Control/ evenness: Consistent drafting resulted in a yarn without thick and thin spots, unless it is a novelty yarn with intentional, evenly spaced thick and thin spots.
- Diameter/grist: The fatter the yarn, the less grist. The thinner the yarn, the more grist.