

ASU Requirements for Testing and Promotion

August 31, 2016

Requirements for Kyu Promotion

The examination system in Aikido is not structured on competition. You will be graded on the following points.

- Your understanding of basic technique appropriate to your level.
- Your spontaneous movement and response appropriate for the attack.
- Your ability to adapt your movement to the force of the attack.
- The concentration and awareness you maintain throughout the examination.
- Continuity of movement is important, not speed.
- Confidence and courage are important, not ego.
- Be prepared to *uke* for someone else of your same level during the examination period. You will be graded on your *ukemi*.

A technique should be demonstrated continuously both right and left until there is a signal to stop. Both *irimi* and *tenkan* movement should be used whenever applicable. You will be expected to know and respond to the Japanese terms. It is necessary to have completed the required number of days of training (each training day counts once, regardless of number of hours, in computing time requirements) and it is necessary that the waiting period between each examination has expired.

Rokyu (30 days / 3 months)

Tenkan
Shomenuchi ikkyo and iriminage
Munetsuki kotegaeshi
Katate dori shihonage
Kokyu tanden ho

▶ Ushiro waza kokyunage

Gokyu (60 days / 4 months): All previous techniques plus

Shomenuchi nikyo
Kata dori ikkyo and nikyo
Munetsuki kaitennage

Nikyu (80 days / 6 months): All previous techniques plus

Yokomenuchi nikyo, sankyo and yonkyo
Koshinage from shomenuchi, katate dori, yokomenuchi, munetsuki
Hanmi handachi:

- ▶ Katate dori shihonage
- ▶ Ryote dori shihonage

Suwariwaza:

- ▶ Shomenuchi ikkyo
- ▶ Kata dori ikkyo
- ▶ Yokomenuchi ikkyo

Yonkyu (60 days / 4 months): All previous techniques plus

Shomenuchi sankyo and yonkyo
Yokomenuchi ikkyo, kotegaeshi and iriminage
Ryote dori tenchinage and shihonage
Katate dori ryote mochi kokyu tanden ho

Ikkyu (90 days / 6 months): All previous techniques plus

Jiyu waza:

- ▶ Standing
- ▶ Hanmi handachi
- ▶ Suwariwaza

Sankyu (70 days / 4 months): All previous techniques plus

- ▶ Ushiro ryokata dori ikkyo
- ▶ Ushiro ryote dori shihonage
- ▶ Ushiro kubi shime kotegaeshi

Tanto dori:

- ▶ Munetsuki
- ▶ Shomenuchi
- ▶ Yokomenuchi

Requirements for Yudansha Promotion

Aikido has a basic structure, *kihon waza*, which allows you to study the fundamental principles of the art. The structure of this training process is the same as a scientific formula. As a formula is an exacting international language that allows scientists to communicate and explore the depths of scientific principle, *kihon waza* is an international language allowing *Aikidoka* from all over the world to communicate and explore the basic truths of Aikido. If this basic structure is lost, Aikido is lost.

During the examination you are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the principles of the art through this very exacting structure of *kihon waza*, clearly and precisely, not your personal ideas or your personal expression. Yudansha examination is not performance art.

The following points are critical:

- The execution of formal *kihon waza*, an understanding of its proper application and of the fundamental principles it demonstrates – most importantly *kokyū*, *musubi*, *irimi tenkan*
- *Hanmi* at all times; before, during, at the conclusion of and following the technique
- Control of your own center; control of your partner's center; control of the technique
- Application of power appropriate to the attack
- The proper pinning technique to demonstrate the conflict is finished
- Timing
- *Zanshin*
- Attitude
- Martial Awareness

The Proper Role of Uke in Yudansha Examination

Taking *ukemi* for yudansha examination is a very serious responsibility. Each technique is developed to study a specific direction and application of force. As *uke* you must understand this and have the ability to give an honest, strong and focused attack that is appropriate for the technique required. A weak attack is unacceptable. A deceptive attack is unacceptable. Since you know the technique your partner is being asked to demonstrate it is easy to stop its execution.

There are no friends or enemies during examination. It is not *uke's* job to make value judgments. You do not take *ukemi* to make your partner look bad. You do not take *ukemi* to make your partner look good. Do not jump into a spectacular fall if the power is not there. Do not make a point of taking a bored and resisting fall to make it look as though your partner didn't really throw you. Either way is dishonest. Remember, you take *ukemi* to avoid injury. You are not taking *ukemi* to show off. *Uke* must only do what is appropriate to the situation. This requires much training and much soul searching.

Time and Technique Requirements for Dan Promotion

Please note the words “consistent training” on the time requirements below. This is very important. The requirements are an absolute minimum for the student who trains 4 to 5 days a week and makes the effort to train directly under ASU senior instructors (ranked 6th Dan or above) at camps and seminars. Promotion is not just a right after a certain amount of time. It is a privilege and must be earned. Anyone

not meeting these requirements must receive more training for the necessary maturity in rank so as to develop a deeper understanding, in order to be eligible for promotion.

Shodan (120 training days and 12 months after receiving Ikkyu)

A candidate must have attended at least two full seminars with an ASU 6th dan or 7th dan instructor since attaining ikkyu grade and within three years of the shodan test. During the event at which the test is to be held it is the responsibility of the candidate's instructor to inform the head of the testing board so that the candidate may be observed more closely.

All basic techniques and previous requirements plus:

- Kumi tachi: First five basic kata
- Tanto dori: A different technique from each – shomenuchi, yokomenuchi, tsuki, two different techniques from ushiro
- Tachi dori: A total of five different techniques. Attacks will be shomenuchi, yokomenuchi, tsuki
- Randori: Three people attacking

Nidan (Minimum 30 months and approximately 400 training days of consistent training after receiving Shodan)

Since attaining *shodan* rank and within two years of the scheduled examination date, the candidate must have at least attended: either

- (i) one of the ASU Intensive Training Camps: DC Summer, West Coast Fall or Florida Winter; or
- (ii) two Four-day Intensives with at least 18 hours of training each, with ASU instructors of 6th dan or above; or
- (iii) three weekend seminars, each with at least 7.5 hours of training each, with ASU instructors of 6th dan or above

During the event at which the test is to be held it is the responsibility of the candidate's instructor to inform the head of the testing board so that the candidate may be observed more closely.

All basic techniques and previous requirements plus:

- Kumi tachi: First twelve basic kata
- Kumi jo: First six basic kata
- Randori: Three people attacking with shinai

Sandan (Minimum 3 1/2 years of consistent training after receiving Nidan)

Since attaining *nidan* rank and within two years of the scheduled examination date, the candidate must have at least attended: either

- (i) one of the ASU Intensive Training Camps: DC Summer, West Coast Fall or Florida Winter;
- (ii) two Four-day Intensives with at least 18 hours of training each, with ASU instructors of 6th dan or above; or
- (iii) four weekend seminars, each with at least 7.5 hours of training each, with ASU instructors of 6th dan or above.

All basic techniques performed to demonstrate more understanding of the relationship of basic principle to the technique with maturity and clarity.

Ranking for Yondan and Above:

This is determined by recommendation of the Kagami Baraki Committee to the Board of ASU which, upon approval, will forward the recommendation to Aikikai Hombu Dojo, Japan.

“True Budo is a work of love. It is a work of giving life to all beings, and not killing or struggling with each other.”