



APICIUS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY

SCHOOL OF SPORTS AND HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS SCIENCES; RELIGIOUS STUDIES; HAPPINESS SCIENCES
COURSE TITLE: The Art of Yoga and Meditation
COURSE CODE: SHSSAY190; LARSAY190; GSHSAY190
3 semester credits

1. DESCRIPTION

This course provides students with an introduction to the art of yoga and meditation to gain an understanding of the philosophical and spiritual contexts that the discipline is rooted in. The course investigation begins with the notion of awareness, and the acquisition of the term through an overview of the principal asanas and their correct practice. The spiritual aspects of yoga are experienced in the form of various meditation techniques from different philosophies as well as the study of pranayama breathing exercises. Topics also include an examination of yoga props as well as dietary and nutritional guidelines, studied through the lens of yoga philosophy gleaned from sacred texts. The course will cover yoga traditions from ancient times to more contemporary interpretations.

2. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- reap the benefits of yoga and be able to apply them to modern living, beyond the yoga practitioner's mat
- actively experience the four paths of yoga: Bhakti, Jnana, Karma and Raja Yoga
- be encouraged, through correct and challenging practice of the discipline, to maximize the potential benefits, both physical and mental
- acquire active knowledge of different traditions
- master founding asanas (postures) and their features
- understand the effects that different breathing exercises can have on the human body, as they foster focused attention and increased self-awareness

3. REQUIREMENTS

There are no prerequisites for this course.

4. METHOD

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving, and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Patanjali, translated by Chip Hartranft, *The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali: A New Translation with Commentary*, Shambhala, 2003.

Iyengar, Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja. *Light on Yoga: Yoga Dipika*, Schocken Books, 1979.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

FURTHER READINGS

Feuerstein, Georg. *The yoga tradition: its history, literature, philosophy and practice*, Hohm Press, 2008.

Walsh, Roger. *Essential Spirituality: Seven Central Practices to Awaken Heart and Mind*, Wiley, 2000.

Feuerstein, Georg. *The Path of Yoga: An Essential Guide to Its Principles and Practices*, Shambhala, 2011.

Sivanda Yoga Center, *The Sivananda Companion to Yoga: A Complete Guide to the Physical Postures, Breathing Exercises, Diet, Relaxation, and Meditation Techniques of Yoga*, Atria Books, 2000.

Singleton, Mark. *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*, Oxford University Press, 2010.

Easwaran, Eknath. *Bhagavad Gita, The Blue Mountain Center of Meditation*, 2007. Pdf available online.

Rama, Swami. *Living with the Himalayan masters*, The Himalayan Institute Press, 2007.

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed. Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/

BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

www.bibliotecadelleoblade.it

THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

7. COURSE MATERIALS

No additional course materials are necessary.

8. COURSE FEES

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM

10% Attendance

10% Participation

20% Commitment in the class-practice

20% Written Journal

20% Mid Term Exam

20% Final Exam

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

Absences are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

Participation: Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

The **Midterm** exam accounts for 20% of the final course grade and consists in open answer questions and an essay. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

The **written journal** describes the personal growth and individual practice experienced during the course and accounts for 20% of the course grade.

The **Final** exam accounts for 20% of the final course grade and consists in open answers questions and an essay. For exam time and date consult the course website. **The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

The final exam is cumulative.

12. LESSONS

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Presentation of the course: Introduction to the class syllabus. Intro to yoga and Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. Proper approach to practice by learning to move slowly and with control. "What is intention?" Discussion will center on health benefits of yoga, including stress reduction and improved posture. Approach to proper practice by gently controlling breathing.
Objectives	Understand the potential benefits of yoga; learn technique for proper breathing
Readings/ Assignments	The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali, Introduction p. ix -xviii Light on Yoga, p. 19 – 53 Practice for a total of at least one hour at home the breathing techniques learned in class

Lesson 2	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Focus on terms. Deepen the study of The Yoga Sutras by analyzing the first 4 Sutras. "What is Hatha Yoga?" What do we need to practice, for how long and how often. Props available for practitioners. Psychology of yoga and writing about self. Start your diary, to observe and transform thoughts that hurt.
Objectives	Understand the principles of "Hatha Yoga" and be able to describe them; become familiar with tools available for practicing yoga; demonstrate active self-reflection
Readings/ Assignments	The Yoga Tradition (in University Library), Chapter 2 The Wheel of Yoga p. 27-31 Begin your course journal according to the instructions provided in class and on the course website

Lesson 3	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Anatomy and physiology of Yoga. A balanced life style. Begin learning movements which soften the articulations and the glands.
Objectives	Distinguish the physical benefits of yoga on the human body
Readings/ Assignments	The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali, Chapter 1 Integration p. 1 - 19

Lesson 4	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Intro to the four paths of yoga: Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Raja yoga. Different yogic approaches suiting different temperaments, which all lead ultimately to the same destination. Begin learning basic sitting postures.
Objectives	Be able to describe the four paths of yoga, similarities and differences; Practice and gain confidence in basic sitting postures.
Readings/ Assignments	The Yoga Tradition (in University Library), Chapter 2 The Wheel of Yoga p. 31 – 58 Continue your course journal according to the instructions provided in class and on the course website Light on Yoga, p. 117 – 179 (sitting postures, specific postures to study in-depth will be indicated in class by instructor)

Lesson 5	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The importance of a vegetarian diet in yoga, preferring natural food over

	processed foods in favor of a dynamic and healthy body and a calm mind. Begin learning basic postures laying on the back.
Objectives	Understand how an individual's diet can influence the body and mind; Find connections between principles of yoga and principles of vegetarian diet; Understand how to adapt these principles to your own needs and preferences; Practice basic postures on back
Readings/ Assignments	Light on Yoga, p. 205 – 233 (postures laying on back, specific postures to study in-depth will be indicated in class by instructor)

Lesson 6	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Cortisol and its effects related to stress. What is Pranayama? Practice positive thinking to open the door to meditation, for spiritual integration. Basic standing postures.
Objectives	Be able to define Pranayama; Demonstrate how positive thinking correlates to an overall successful practice of yoga; Practice basic standing postures
Readings/ Assignments	Light on Yoga, p. 61 – 74 (standing postures, specific postures to study in-depth will be indicated in class by instructor) Light on Yoga, p.431 – 448 (Pranayama)

Lesson 7	
Meet	In class
Lecture	MIDTERM EXAM

Lesson 8	
NA	ACADEMIC BREAK

Lesson 9	
Meet	In class
Lecture	What is Meditation? Bring awareness into your practice through an overview of different meditations belonging to different traditions.
Objectives	Determine the importance of meditation in practicing yoga; Categorize different styles and techniques for yogic meditation; Employ techniques for successful, focused meditation
Readings/ Assignments	The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali, Chapter 2 Path to Realization p. 21-45 The instructor will provide further readings on Meditation via the course website

Lesson 10	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The Bhagavad Gita, inspiring ancient writing for the practitioner: excerpt revolving around yoga.
Objectives	Evaluate and interpret views on yoga expressed in the Bhagavad Gita.
Readings/ Assignments	Excerpts from Bhagavad Gita translated in English indicated in class by instructor and provided via course website or University library

Lesson 11	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Diversity in contemporary yoga: different yogic traditions. Differences in yoga practiced in the Western and Eastern world, for an integrated and comprehensive view of the discipline.
Objectives	Examine the way yoga has evolved in various parts of the world and discuss what "yoga" means today, locally and universally
Readings/	The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali, Chapter 3 The Extraordinary Powers p.45-60 AND

Assignments	Afterword: The Yoga-Sutra Today p. 75-96 The instructor will provide further readings on current yoga practices via the course website
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Lesson 12	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The importance of cultivating a sustainable and accessible practice. Refine the use of props and learn how to modify and adapt Asanas and meditation techniques according to your own body and needs.
Objectives	Learn how to develop a sustainable and approachable practice method and be able to attune it to suit your body and life. Gain knowledge of the principal groups of asanas through the examination and analysis of their variations and modifications.
Readings/ Assignments	The instructor will provide readings from the course textbook.

Lesson 13	
Meet	In class
Lecture	The importance of recovery through Savasana. Different techniques to reach the necessary concentration to relax body and mind after the practice.
Objectives	Recognize the importance of Savasana in the entirety of yoga; Learn techniques to relax mind and body
Readings/ Assignments	Light on Yoga, p. 422-424 (Savasana)

Lesson 14	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Importance of sequencing. Bringing Asanas together with Pranayama exercises and meditation.
Objectives	Consolidate all aspects of yoga in each individual's experience so far; Answer student questions regarding continued practice of yoga beyond the classroom
Readings/ Assignments	Preparation for the final exam.

Lesson 15	
Meet	In class
Lecture	FINAL EXAM