

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Physical Activity for Lifetime Wellness**  
RECR 186 DL4 – Yoga: Introduction  
1 Credit, Spring 2021  
T/TR 7:30am - 8:45am  
ONLINE

**Faculty**

Name: Chris Liss  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
Office Location: TBD  
Office Phone: 703-459-3620  
Email Address: cliss@gmu.edu

**Prerequisites/Corequisites - none**

**University Catalog Course Description**

Introduces students to the practice of Hatha yoga. Class emphasis will be on learning yoga asanas (postures) and pranayama (breathing exercises) to enhance physical fitness and mental concentration.

**Course Overview**

Readings, lectures, demonstrations and class participation will be used to analyze the practice of yoga asana and yoga philosophy.

- Students with injuries or pre-existing conditions that may affect performance must inform the instructor.
- Students with specific medication conditions, limited flexibility or injuries will learn appropriate modifications of poses for their own practices.
  
- All e-mail communication will be through GMU e-mail system.
- Students are requested to bring their own yoga mat to class.
- Comfortable stretch clothing are required. No street clothes may be worn.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using format via Zoom and Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on January 24 by 5pm.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

### *Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#supported-browsers](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

[https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting\\_Started/Browser\\_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems)

Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.

Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]

Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]

Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Windows Media Player:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>

Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

## *Expectations*

Course Week: Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.

### Log-in Frequency:

Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least [2] times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.

### Participation:

Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. Late work is not accepted for credit.

### Technical Competence:

Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

### Technical Issues:

Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

### Workload:

Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

### Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

### Netiquette:

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

## **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Demonstrate at least 20 asanas, including proper alignment, with a strong emphasis on safe practice. Students with specific medication conditions, limited flexibility or injuries will learn appropriate modifications of poses for their own practices.
2. Identify the poses and demonstrate proficiency in “Sun Salutation” (Surya Namaskar); a Vinyasa or steady flow of 12 classic postures linked with breath work in a continuous movement.
3. Name the benefits and contra-indications of asanas.
4. State the need for and importance of warm-up practices and poses.
5. Develop proficiency in the practice of three types of pranayama.
6. Demonstrate techniques of basic relaxation.

**Professional Standards** n/a

**Required Texts:** None

### **On-line readings and videos on Blackboard**

If you are interested in developing a home practice or continuing to practice at a studio, I recommend the following: *Light on Yoga* by B.K.S. Iyengar or *Yoga The Spirit and Practice of Moving into Stillness* by Erich Schiffman

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard).

## **Assignments and/or Examinations**

### **Journal**

Yoga is a discipline of personal transformation and a journal is a useful tool for self-study. Students will be given on-line readings, videos, and class topics to respond to in a thoughtful, written journal entry of 100 words or more. These are found on Blackboard under Tools/Journals and Course Content. Please respond via Blackboard. Each is worth 6 points.

**Journal #1** - Max Strom Ted Talk

**Journal #2** - Jamie Elmer: Wrists in Downward Facing Dog

**Journal #3** - Bernie Clark: How to Practice Yin Yoga

### **Practical Exam #1– 4 points – group practice – no preparation needed**

Students will be guided through a practice integrating poses learned to date. Students are expected to demonstrate recognition of poses, necessary personal accommodations, and comprehension of safe alignment. No make-ups on exam are offered unless student has a doctor's note.

### **Practical Exam #2– 4 points – group practice – no preparation needed**

Students will be guided through a full practice integrating poses learned to date. Students are expected to demonstrate recognition of poses, necessary personal accommodations, and comprehension of safe alignment. No make-ups on exam are offered unless student has a doctor's note.

### **Practical Exam #3– 4 points – written test**

## **Other Requirements**

Class participation and attendance are required. Doctor's note is required for any excused absence. Phone calls, emails, and texts DO NOT excuse an absence. You will have one absence that is excused. Any more require a doctor note.

Students are required to arrive 5-10 minutes **before** class start time to set up practice space. Be prepared to begin practice at beginning of class time. Class begins practice promptly at 7:30am. It is disruptive and dangerous to join practice late. Arriving to class on time is part of your participation requirement and one point per 15 minutes late will be deducted for tardiness.

Students provide their own mat, block, straps, and other props. For our purposes, a hand towel works fine for a strap.

## **Grading**

## EVALUATION:

This course will be graded on a point system with a possible 100 to be earned as followed:

Class practice: 5 points each class: total of **70 points**

Journal responses – total of 3 Blackboard journals at 6 points each: total **18 points**

Student will be given topics, videos, and articles for response journal topics.

Practical Exams – three practical exams at 4 points each: total **12 points**

Total: **100 points**

## Grading Scale

### Grading Policies

A	= 94 – 100	B+	= 88 – 89	C+	= 78 – 79	D	= 60 – 69
A-	= 90 – 93	B	= 84 – 87	C	= 74 – 77	F	= 0 – 59
		B-	= 80 – 83	C-	= 70-73		

## Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

## Class Schedule

### Day One 3/16

Read article on Blackboard and answer in journal (counts for first class): Article “Why Practice Yoga?” found under course content.

### Day Two 3/18

Practice 1 (day2): **Basics**

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures in this practice:** wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, Warm-up/Supine - knee to chest, simple twist, happy baby, Lunge (supine)

Squat, child, table top Cat tilt/Dog tilt, plank, downward facing dog, forward fold, Iyengar shoulder opener, plank, shoulder opener, reverse table w/ adirondack chair, legs up the wall, passive backbend, rest

**Concepts highlighted:** warm-up, cat tilt, dog tilt, benefits of squat, somatic awareness

**Challenge:** practice the warm-up part of this practice every day and notice how you feel

**Journal #1 on blackboard: Respond to journal blackboard video/article post.**

Max Strom Ted Talk/Journal 1

### Day Three 3/23

Practice 2 (day3) **Essential Practice**

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures in this practice:** squat w/ breathing practice - breath of equal duration/twists, supine warm-up (wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, figure 4 sequence), boat, mini-sun salutes w/gift breath, Sun salute C w/ Warrior 2, side angle, Bikram triangle and sphinx; child, Bridge, twist, legs up the wall, passive backbend, rest, seated OM

**Concepts highlighted:** vagus nerve, breath of equal duration, side angle/bridge (support)

**Challenge:** practice daily at least 20 minutes

**Journal #2 on blackboard: Respond to journal blackboard video/article post.**

Jamie Elmer: Wrists in downward facing dog/Journal 2

### Day Four 3/25

Practice 3 (day4): **Breathing Basics**

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures:** squat, wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, constructive rest, meridian stretch, child, plank, downward facing dog, forward fold, mini-sun salute, catcher's

pose, suspension twist, horse stance, standing lateral bend, reverse bound angle, twist, rest.

**Breathing practices:** belly breath, rib breath, *ujjayi* breath/ocean breathing, lateral bend breath hold.

**Concepts highlighted:** Inner/Axis (Max Strom) style, autonomic nervous system/sympathetic/parasympathetic, lengthening the spine, core tall, rib cage breathing, benefits of breathing practice, breath initiated movement

**Challenge:** practice a breathing techniques for 5 minutes every day and notice how you feel

### Day Five 3/30

#### Practice 4 (Day 5) Essential Practice

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures in this practice:** squat w/ breathing practice/twists/spinal flush, supine warm-up (wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, figure 4 sequence), boat, mini-sun salutes w/gift breath, Sun salute C w/ Warrior 2, side angle, Bikram triangle and sphinx; child, Bridge, twist, legs up the wall, passive backbend, rest, seated OM

**Concepts highlighted:** “a breathing practice accompanied by postures”

**Challenge:** practice daily at least 20 minutes

**Journal #3 on blackboard: Respond to journal blackboard video/article post.**

Bernie Clark Yin Yoga/Journal 3

### Day Six 4/1

#### Practice 5 (day6) Yin basics

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, rolled blanket folded neatly, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster, a wall available to put legs up, damp washcloth or hand wipes, relatively clean feet - yes, that’s an odd one, but you’ll understand once you start practicing

**Postures:** figure 4, dragon (squat lunge), caterpillar (forward fold), waterfall *viparita kirani* Puddle - Rest *savasana* Longevity Breath

**Concepts highlighted:** Yin yoga, hamstrings, connective tissue

**Challenge:** practice the “hamstring” massage each day and note flexibility before/after



### **Day Seven 4/6**

#### Practical Exam #1

Group Practice or on-line w/response

### **Day Eight 4/8**

#### Practice 6 (day8) Energy Medicine/Yin Yoga

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, rolled blanket folded neatly, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures:** Melting Heart, EMYoga: Wake-up, arm cupping, schoolyard hook-up, cross-leg fold, “dangle” w/ crown pull and spinal flush, Butterfly w/leg cupping, soleus massage, Constructive Rest w/ 5 Element Flow/Control, Bridge w/ electrics, anchor and wander

**Breathing practices:** Cosmic Orbit, Crocodile Breath

**Concepts highlighted:** lymph system, TCM and meridians

**Challenge:** practice the wake-up at least once a day and note how you feel

### **Day Nine 4/13**

#### Practice 7 (day9) Essential Practice

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures in this practice:** EMYoga wake-up, squat w/ breathing practice/twists/spinal flush, supine warm-up (wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, figure 4 sequence), boat, mini-sun salutes w/gift breath, Celtic weave, spleen trace, Sun salute C w/ Warrior 2, side angle, Bikram triangle and sphinx; child, Bridge, 5E control & flow, twist, legs up the wall w/electrics and anchor & wander, passive backbend, rest, seated OM

**Concepts highlighted:** subtle body/energy

**Challenge:** practice daily at least 20 minutes

**ALL JOURNAL ENTRIES DUE BY THIS DATE!**

### **Day Ten 4/15**

#### Practice 8 (day10) vinyasa basics/yoga nidra

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures:** squat, warm-up, Sun salute B, *Viparita kirani*, rest **Breathing practices:** chanting, ocean breathing, deep relaxation

**Concepts highlighted:** What is vinyasa? What is yoga nidra?

**Challenge:** chant OM (UM, AM, or HM) 2-3 minutes daily and notice how you feel

### Day Eleven 4/20

Practical Exam #2 in person or on-line

### Day Twelve 4/22

Practice 9 (day 12) kundalini & 5 Tibetans

**Supplies:** yoga mat, blanket folded neatly, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready

**Postures:** Kundalini warm up, cat/dog, spine twists, seated wide leg, child, squat, 5 Tibetans

**Breathing practices:** Tibetan 9 part breath, breath of fire, chanting

**Concepts highlighted:** What is kundalini yoga?

**Challenge:** practice the 5 Tibetans or 9 part Tibetan Breath daily. Note how you feel.

### Day Thirteen 4/27 Practice 10 (day 13) Essential Practice

2 (day3) 4 (day5) 7 (day9) 10 (day13): Essential

**Supplies:** yoga mat, strap, 2 blocks, blanket folded neatly at least as wide as short edge of mat, maybe a second blanket or beach towel ready, pillow or bolster

**Postures in this practice:** EMYoga wake-up, squat w/ breathing practice/twists/spinal flush, supine warm-up (wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby w/K-1, supine lunge, figure 4 sequence), boat, mini-sun salutes w/ celtic weave/spleen trace w/gift breath, Sun salute C w/ Warrior 2, side angle, Bikram triangle and sphinx; child, Bridge, /5E control & flow, twist, legs up the wall w/electrics and anchor & wander, passive backbend, rest, seated OM

**Concepts highlighted:** creating your own daily practice

**Challenge:** practice daily at least 20 minutes/keep a journal; register for intermediate session

### Day Fourteen 4/29

**Practical Exam #3:**

Written exam on Blackboard

ALL WRITTEN WORK DUE

**Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.**

### **Core Values Commitment**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### 1. GMU Policies and Resources for students

##### *Policies*

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- c. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- d. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu>).
- e. Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

##### *Campus Resources*

1. Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
2. **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:** As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at [703-380-1434](tel:703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [703-993-2380](tel:703-993-2380). You may also

seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

3. For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
4. For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .**