

George Mason University

College of Education and Human Development

Physical Activity for Lifetime Wellness

RECR 186 B01 – Yoga: Introduction

1 Credit, Summer 2024

T/TR 8 am - 9:15 am /Fairfax Campus

May 28 - July 27

Faculty

Name: Chris Liss

Office Hours: By Appointment

Office Location: Zoom

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.

- Comfortable stretch clothing are required. No street clothes may be worn.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using [select either a synchronous or an asynchronous] format via 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 by May 8 at 9 am.

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

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

- 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:

- 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/

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.
- 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

Suggested 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 or *Your Body, Your Yoga* by Bernie Clark.

Course Performance Evaluation

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

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Journals and Practice/Asynchronous Days

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 the journal links on Blackboard. **Journals are written**

on asynchronous days. The due date means by 5pm that date. We often use the material in the Journals for class the next day. Each is worth 5 points.

A. "Why Does Anyone Practice Yoga" 5/29

B. IA-30 Max Strom Inner Axis 30 minute Practice 6/4

C. Jamie Elmer: Wrists in Downward Facing Dog AND Arturo Peal's Wall SS 5/28

D. Max Strom Ted Talk: Breathe to Heal Journal 6/5

E. IA-30 Max Strom Inner Axis 30 minute Practice after three days 6/11

F. Relaxing Breath Practice with Tracee Stanley 6/12

G. Fluid Yoga - Morning Practice with Kevan Gale/Fluid Vinyasa Yoga w/Kevan 6/18

I. Tracee Stanley Three Day Meditation Practice 6/20

J. Bernie Clark: How to Practice Yin; Paulie Zink; Cedric Hip Stretch Practice 7/9

K. Evening Yoga/ Jamie Elmer AND Gentle Wake Up Flow/ Athina AM/PM Yoga 6/25

M. Kundalini Yoga 7/15

N. iRest 6/26

X. Final Exam 7/25 – 14 points – written test. Due by 10am.

- **Other Requirements**

Class participation and attendance are required. **Live Zoom classes**

Tuesday / Thursday 8 am - 9:15 am. 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 class start time. 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. You must keep your camera on during class to receive participation points. Each zoom class is worth 6 points.

- **Grading**

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

Class practice: 6 points each class: total of **66 points**

Journal responses/Asynchronous practices: 5 points each: total **60 points**

Final Exam is worth total **14 points**

Total: **140 points**

Grading Policies:

Grading Scale

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

Live Zoom 1

“Meet Yourself Where You Are”

5/28

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: easy pose, seiza, cat tilt/dog tilt in table top, Painted
Breath/sama vritti (breath of equal duration), savasana

Concepts highlighted: Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, props, asana means, self-compassion, breath

AS: Journal C: Due 5/28

C. Jamie Elmer: Wrists in Downward Facing Dog AND Arturo Peal’s Wall SS

AS: Journal A due 5/29

Read article on Blackboard and answer in journal: Article “Why Does Anyone Practice Yoga?” found under course content. Link for writing response is in “tools” – “journals.”

Live Zoom 2

“Posture Basics”

5/30

Posture 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: constructive rest, Warm-up/Supine - knee to chest, simple twist, happy baby, Lunge (supine), child, table top Cat tilt/Dog tilt, mountain pose w/block, shoulder opener w/block, forward fold, Iyengar shoulder opener, legs up the wall, passive backbend, rest - Gratitude meditation

Concepts highlighted: warm-up, cat tilt, dog tilt, somatic awareness, power of gratitude, Eight Limbs of Yoga

AS: Journal B due 6/4

B. IA-30 Max Strom Inner Axis 30 minute Practice

AS Journal D due 6/5

D. Max Strom Ted Talk: Breathe to Heal Journal

Live Zoom 3

“Breathing Basics”

6/6

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: constructive rest, sama vritti/ujjayi w/painted breath, supine warm-up (wind removing pose, simple twist, happy baby, supine lunge, figure 4 sequence), mini-sun salutes w/gift breath, catcher's pose/suspension bridge w/cat/dog tilts, lateral bend breath, bound angle angle pose, rest, seated OM

Concepts highlighted: uses of breath: ujjayi w/equal duration, lateral breath, gift breath, intro to ANS, history of yoga

Live Zoom 4

"Breathing Practice Accompanied By Postures"

6/11

AS Journal E due 6/11

E. IA-30 Max Strom Inner Axis 30 minute Practice after three days - **please note this journal is a three day in a row practice - pace yourself accordingly**

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: supine warm-up, hip reset, constructive rest, child, plank, downward facing dog flow, forward fold, mini-sun salute, runner's lunge, pyramid, catcher's pose, suspension twist, horse stance, standing lateral bend, bridge w/ calming the storm, reverse bound angle, twist, viparita kirani, **Durgha** breath, **ujjayi** breath/ocean breathing, lateral bend breath hold, calming the storm.

Concepts highlighted: Inner/Axis (Max Strom) style, autonomic nervous system, sympathetic/parasympathetic, breath initiated movement

AS Journal F due 6/12

F. Relaxing Breath Practice with Tracee Stanley

Live Zoom 5

"Breath and Posture Combined"

6/13

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: warm-up w/hip reset, child, down dog, forward fold, bird, (warrior 3), pyramid, warrior I, warrior II, side angle, reverse warrior, reverse table, bridge, painted breath: sama vritti/ujjayii, ocean breathing, Bhramari (Bee) Breath, lateral bend breath hold

Concepts highlighted: History of Yoga, Vagus Nerve, pratyahara

AS Journal G due 6/18

G. Fluid Yoga - Morning Practice with Kevan Gale/Fluid Vinyasa Yoga w/Kevan

Live Zoom 6

“Vinyasa Basics: Surya Namaskar”

6/20

AS Journal I Tracee Stanley 3 day Breathing / Meditation Practice due 6/20

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: warm-up, Sun salute A, B, & C, Warriors, warm-up, Suryanamaskar (Sun salute) A, B, & C, runner lunge, twist, lizard, half split, chair, Virabhadrasana (Warrior) 1, Connecting heaven and earth, Balasana (Child), chanting, ocean breathing, deep relaxation, prana dharana

Concepts highlighted: What is vinyasa?

AS Journal K due 6/25

K. Evening Yoga/ Jamie Elmer OR Gentle Wake Up Flow/ Athina AM/PM Yoga

AS Journal N iRest due 6/26

Live Zoom 7

“Vinyasa & Yoga Nidra: Fill Your Mind with Auspicious Thoughts”

6/27

AS Journal N iRest due 6/26

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, extra pillows and blankets

Postures: warm-up, table top flow, child w/ lateral hold, seated hamstring flow, legs up the wall on block, Yoga Nidra #3 Deep Relaxation

Concepts highlighted: What is yoga nidra? Why do it?

Live Zoom 8

“Vinyasa”

7/2

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: warm-up, Sun salute A, B, & C, Warriors, Side angle, lunge, pyramid, triangle, seated head to knee, reverse table, chanting, ocean breathing, deep relaxation, prana dharana

Concepts highlighted: history of vinyasa

No class July 4th

AS Journal J due 7/9

J. Bernie Clark: How to Practice Yin; Interview w/ Paulie Zink; Practice deep hip stretch w/ Cedric

Live Zoom 9

“Yin / Vin”

7/11

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

Postures in this practice: Constructive Rest: Swan, Twisted Root, Dragonfly, Swan, jaw release - joint release, shake; mini-sun salutes, calming the storm; *“Golden Seed” yin flow, savasana*

Breathing Practices: sama vritti breath/ujjayi, calming the storm, ocean breathing

Concepts highlighted: vagus nerve and ANS review w/freeze focus, the body is energy; Liz Koch; psoas

Challenge: practice golden seed flow daily

Opening breathing practice: shamatta - breath counting 1:2 ratio

Live Zoom 10

“Power of Breath: Kundalini Yoga”

7/16

AS Journal M Kundalini Yoga due 7/15

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, 5 Tibetans

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

Concepts highlighted: What is kundalini yoga? Explain exam.

Live Zoom 11

“Intro to Yin Yoga”

7/18

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

Postures: figure 4, dragon (squat lunge), caterpillar (forward fold), waterfall *viparita kirani*

Puddle - Rest *savasana* Longevity Breath

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

AS Final Exam/practice time: 7/23 - 7/25

please note this exam is a five day in a row practice of your choice from our class recordings along with your observations – pace yourself accordingly

AS Final Exam due 7/23 -25

X. Final Exam 7/23 - 7/25 written test with practice notes: 14 points

ALL WRITTEN WORK DUE by July 25 at 10am

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

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- 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.
- 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/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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