

Yoga & Mindfulness PEAC 52

Fall 2012



Time:	9:30 – 11:10am, Wed or Thurs or Fri	Room:	Patrick Gym Rm 217
Instructor:	John McConnell	Phone:	802-488-0124
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Instructional Fee: \$85

PEAC charges course fees to offset the costs of instructors, course equipment, and other administrative costs directly associated with the class and/or program. These fees are necessary because PEAC does not receive an allocation from tuition dollars collected for its courses.

ADA Student Accommodations: *In keeping with University policy, any student with a disability who needs academic/classroom accommodations should contact ACCESS. ACCESS coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The ACCESS office is located at A170 Living/Learning Center and can be reached by phone at 802-656-7753 or by email at access@uvm.edu. To receive accommodations in the course, please bring the instructor a copy of the letter provided by the ACCESS office and speak with the instructor about a plan to implement the recommendations.*

Religious Holidays: *Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. Students must submit, in writing, to the instructor by the end of the second full week of classes their documented religious holiday schedule for the semester. A student is permitted to make up any work necessary that was missed due to the religious holiday absence, which must be coordinated with the instructor prior to the student's absence.*

Note on Classroom Location:

Class will be held in Rm. 217 of Patrick Gym. This room can be hard to find. If you are unfamiliar with the room be sure you know where it is located before the first class.

“Now, begin the practice of yoga.”
yoga sutras of patanjali

Goals and Objectives:

This class is about giving the student personal tools that can be used to make their academic life, social life, and life beyond school more enjoyable and stress-free. Through yoga and mindfulness practices, and well as the homework contemplations and assignments, students will explore who they are and develop a deeper insight into the world around them.

By the end of the course each student will have an understanding of alignment principles that are used to safely practice the physical aspect of yoga (hatha yoga). Along with the alignment principles we will learn a variety of different postures from simple to very advanced. Students will develop a meditation practice during the course, along with learning some basic breathing exercises and yoga philosophy.

Why is this class important to you as a student?

It has been proven that a regular yoga practice using appropriate alignment principles can keep the practitioner physically pain free, flexible, and active. Also, a basic understanding of meditation and mindfulness practices and literature provides tools that can help you work through the numerous personally stressful situations that come up during the college experience and beyond. Committing to a personal yoga/meditation practice while in college will undoubtedly provide you with a healthier body, a clearer mind and a happier heart for your whole life.

***“In any activity, concentrate on the gap between in breath and out breath.
Thus attain to bliss.”***
vijnana bhairava tantra

Why is this an important course for me to teach?

I want to play an active role, however small, in making the world a better place. My feeling is this class does just that.

My commitment to your learning:

I am committed to helping each student learn this material and to creating a fun, safe group environment in which to practice. Much of the learning will be outside of the classroom through your own personal practice and mindfulness exercises. If there are any questions,

however big or small, I am readily available via email, phone, or on my website. I also will be using my website extensively to share materials through blog posts and videos. During the course I welcome and appreciate any feedback on how I can better meet your learning needs.

Attire:

- Suitable workout attire (leotards, tights, sweats, shorts, T-shirt) required. “Street clothes” are unacceptable.
- Yoga mats are provided, but if you have your own yoga mat you want to use that’s great.
- Movement is practiced in bare feet.

Prerequisites: none

Textbooks:

No textbooks are required. Here are some of the books I may be referencing during the course – this is for reference only.

Yoga Spandkarika – Daniel Odier
Bhagavad Gita – various translations
Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – various translations
Vijnanabharava Tantra – various translations

In Class:

- My intention is for the class to be light-hearted, fun, and to create a sense of community -- learning yoga and mindfulness doesn’t exclude laughter and having fun with friends.
- Each class will include a mediation, discussion period, and physical yoga practice.
- Mindfulness concepts will be presented and contemplated using stories, group discussion, journaling, with reference materials available and on my website.
- Yoga postures will be presented by demonstrations and learned in small groups or individually as well as materials from my website.
- I will make physical and verbal adjustments to help students find the optimal, safest posture. Students will also be giving adjustments to each other.
- **Bring a notebook/journal and something to write with to every class, including the first.**

Feelings come and go like clouds in a windy sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Homework & Home Practice:

- **Students are required to keep a daily journal and bring it to every class. The physical journal is for your alone, but entries will be requested via email.**
- at least one (two recommended) yoga class practiced at home or at an area studio
- maintain a daily 10 minute meditation practice
- short journal entries, a couple sentences, are required each day about your meditation and yoga experience.

Example journal entry: *Today during my yoga practice I tried practicing outside. I discovered that I'm more in touch with my surroundings doing that and loved it! I normally meditate during the morning, but today I meditated at night. I was surprised to find I actually liked it better and I slept great. I'm planning on incorporating evening meditation in the future.*

- Each week you will be given an assignment that you journal about daily. These assignments are mainly about bringing awareness to yourself and your world.
- Once per month email two of your practice/meditation entries from your journal.
- Once per month email one week of a selected homework assignment from your journal.

This course is about giving you knowledge and skills that you will hopefully carry on beyond this class. By doing the homework assignments and meditation/yoga practice you will have established a good routine to follow after the class is finished.

Grading:

Grading involves 3 factors: attendance, journaling homework, class participation via yoga practice/group discussion.

To receive the highest grade:

- attend all classes
- arrive to class on time
- participate in discussions
- do homework contemplations, practice, and meditation assignments
- homework handed in on time

What lowers grade:

- Miss class without making it up (lower one grade)
- Homework handed in late (lower ½ grade)
- Homework at a lower standard (lower ½ grade)
- Minimal in-class participation (lower ½ grade)
- Arrive late to class regularly (lower one grade)

PEAC Department Policy: Students missing 3 classes without a makeup will not pass the course.

Extra Credit / Make Up Classes:

You can make up missed classes (two maximum) and maintain an A grade. To make up a class you will need to attend one of my other classes in town or on campus (I have a class every day but Saturday). In the event it's impossible to attend a make up class we can work out an extra credit assignment instead.

If there is an instance that you are unable to attend class please e-mail me and let me know why you aren't attending. All missed classes need to be made up in order to get the highest grade for the course.

Expectations:

- Participation in the physical practice, discussion, and class activities. Your input and participation will make this a great class!
- Be in class physically and mentally and arrive on time and stay the entire class period.
- Do the homework assignments and keep your journal up-to-date.
- Hand in homework assignments on time.

Examinations & Quizzes:

There will not be any exams during the course.

Weekly Class Schedule:**Segment #1 (first 1/3 of semester)**

This is the most important period of the course. We will be covering the basic principles of alignment, the basic yoga postures, as well as fundamental breathing and mindfulness work and introducing the foundation texts of yoga. Even for those students who have extensive yoga experience, it's always good to get back to the basics and refine the foundations of the practice. This segment will get everyone on even footing as we move forward.

Segment #2 (second 1/3 of semester)

During this segment of the class we will begin to take the foundations of the practice we covered in the first five weeks and expand them into a more vigorous practice. We will begin to work on more complex and challenging postures. I will still be giving hands on and verbal adjustments to the students with an expectation that the basic ideas of a safe yoga practice are understood. We will also deepen our mindfulness exercises in and outside of the classroom. These exercises will build on what we learned during the initial 5 week segment.

Segment #3 (final 1/3 of semester)

The final four weeks of the class are about rounding out the knowledge of the students. From student feedback and my own observations the last 4 weeks will be about refining the student's mindfulness knowledge as well deepen your physical practice. Student input will be very important in deciding where we go and what we work during this last segment.

"Be a warrior. With the sword of wisdom sever the doubt your heart".

- *Bhagavad Gita*

Important dates:

First Day of Classes	Aug 27
Last Day to Add Classes without Instructor Permission	Aug 31
Labor Day Holiday	Sep 3
Add/Drop, Pass/No Pass, Audit Deadline	Sep 10
Last Day to Withdraw	Oct 29
Thanksgiving Recess	Nov 19-23
Last Day of Classes	Dec 5
Reading and Exam Period	Dec 6-14
Reading Days	Dec 6,12
Exam Days	Dec 7,10,11,13,14
December Commencement	Dec 15

**Remember to bring appropriate clothes and a journal/notebook to the all classes.
I look forward to a fantastic semester!**