

West LA College
KINESIOLOGY 251 – Yoga Skills

SPRING 2014 Section: 2982

Friday 3:30 – 5:35 PM, meets February 10 – June 9, 2014, Final Exam Friday June 6 during class time

Room: FA 104

Instructor: Carol McDowell

Office Hours: 5:35 - 6:00 PM in classroom, or by appointment

E-mail: naiamcd@gmail.com (please put West LA College in subject line)

Course Description:

Open to all levels, this course is designed to improve overall fitness with an emphasis on stress management and yoga. An ancient form of movement involving prescribed postures and breathing techniques, yoga helps promote strength, flexibility, coordination, and balance. The course will focus on greater awareness and unity of mind and body through an introduction to Hatha Yoga. It will include basic pranayama (breathing techniques), asanas (yoga postures), guided relaxation and meditation techniques, and yogic philosophy.

Course Objectives:

- *To perform basic asanas with proper alignment and breath.
- *To safely increase physical flexibility, strength, and balance.
- *To increase relaxation and reduce stress.
- *To understand basic yoga philosophy, terminology, and history.

Preparing for class:

- *Bring a bottle of water with a lid. No other food, drink, or gum is allowed in class.
- *Bring a journal or notebook to take notes, and process thoughts and questions about the experience of yoga.
- * Students can borrow PE department mats. However, it is recommended that you bring your own mat for sanitary purposes. Mats can be purchased at places such as yoga studios, sports stores, Target, and online.
- *Wear comfortable workout clothes. Remove shoes and socks. Fasten long hair away from face and neck.
- *Turn off cell phones and other noise-making devices and stow them in your gear away from our practice area.
- *It is best not to eat a heavy meal 2 hours before class.
- * If you have injuries or illness that arise during the course always inform the instructor so appropriate modifications can be made.
- *The instructor may use touch to adjust or assist a student in a particular pose. If the student does not wish to be touched, please let the instructor know before class (preferably), or at the time of the adjustment.
- *Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disabled Student Programs and Services located in HRLC 119, phone number (310) 287-4450, as soon as possible to better ensure such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Evaluation:

Attendance and Participation: 50 points

Your presence, concentration, effort, and commitment are the most important part of your learning experience in class. Students are allowed two absences. After that, students will lose 2 points for each absence.

Class practice will begin promptly 3:40 PM. Students will lose 1 point for each late arrival or early departure. If you must leave early, please inform the instructor at the beginning of class. If you are late, students should enter quietly, and for safety purposes, it is up to the instructor if you can still participate.

We will yoga practice in class with non-hierarchical expectations. Each individual is encouraged to work at his or her own pace with the *krama* (stage) of an *asana* (pose) that is fitting for his or her health--be that an ongoing condition, or simply what feels right today. Learn to listen inwardly for guidance and practice yoga at the intelligent edge of your ability, endurance, and attention. It is important that you take responsibility in this area of your experience. Learn to respect your capabilities and limitations and become aware of how they change over time. Communicate with the instructor when you have a question or need assistance.

Make-ups: Up to three classes can be made up by taking another yoga class--with the instructor's permission. The make-up class should be written about in the student's *Home Practice Journal*. Please note: You cannot make-up Mid-term and Final Projects AFTER the scheduled class time. All Reflection Papers are due 5/30/2014--no exceptions.

Home Practice Log: 10 points total due every week starting 2/28-5/30

Students are required to take notes in class and apply them to their own weekly home practice. Practices should be a minimum of one hour a week (either 10 minute a day 5 times a week, 20 minutes 3 times a week, 30 minutes twice a week, or 60 minutes once a week). Students should note any successes, challenges, and questions that arise during home practice sessions along with the date, time, length, and content of the session.

Mid-term Project: 10 points due 4/18/2014

By the mid-way point of the course you will research one yoga asana (pose), which you will demonstrate and teach to a small group in class. The demonstration will include the basic alignment points and benefits that are associated with that particular asana. Then, together as a group, you will choose an order and create transitions between each asana in the group.

Reflection Paper: 10 points due 5/30/2014

Please select an article listed below to read. Then, write a two-page, typed paper that reflects on a practical or philosophical yogic concept discussed in that source as it relates to your experience of yoga.

Kramer, Joel, "Yoga as Self-Transformation," *Yoga Journal* May/June 1980.

(published online at <http://www.joelkramer-dianaalstad.com/uploads/YogaAsSelfTransformation.pdf>)

Schiffmann, Erich, "Why Yoga?" *Yoga, the Spirit and Practice of Moving Into Stillness*, NY:Pocket Books, 1996.

(published online at http://www.movingintostillness.com/book/yoga_benefits_of.html)

Final Project: 20 points due 6/6/2014

By the final date of the class, students will develop their own yoga *vinyasa*, or sequence for their home practice and present it to a group in class. This yoga sequence should include: *pranayama* or *kriya* (focused breathing or breath/movement meditation), *namaskar* (classic/sun/moon salutation to warm-up), a series of 6-8 asanas (poses and counter poses), and *savasana* (guided meditation for relaxation and reflection).

Final Grade:

Final Grades are based on percentages; the number of total points may be more or less than 100:

A (90-100%) **B** (80-89%) **C** (70-79%) **D** (60-69%) **F** (59% and below)

Although I will do my best to assist you, it is the student's responsibility to add or drop courses in a timely manner. Please note that during Spring Session 2014, the last day to add or drop classes with a refund OR to file for Pass/No Pass is 2/9 online and 2/21 2 PM in person. The last day to drop the class with a "W" is 5/9/2014.

Class Calendar:

2/14-17 Presidents Day, campus closed.
 3/31 (Monday) Cesar Chavez Day, campus closed
 4/18 Mid-term Project DUE.
 4/7-4/13 Spring Break, campus closed.
 5/30 Two-page Reflection Papers DUE.
 6/6 Final Project DUE, during class time 3:30-5:35 PM

Resources:

www.yogajournal.com

www.movingintostillness.com

<http://www.joelkramer-dianaalstad.com/uploads/YogaAsSelfTransformation.pdf>

notes:

*Alternate resources can be assigned for those of you who have practiced yoga with me in the past.

**This syllabus is subject to change upon the instructor's discretion.