



PALAZZI FLORENCE ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FLORENCE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS APICIUS - INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF HOSPITALITY

SCHOOL OF SPORTS AND HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF 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, in class demonstration and class discussions, for a continuum of theory and practice. 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. TEXT BOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES

TEXT BOOK

PATANJALI, translated by Chip Hartranft, *The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali: A New Translation with Commentary*, Shambhala; Shambhala Classics edition (April 1, 2003)
IYENGAR B.K.S., *Light on Yoga: Yoga Dipika*, Schocken Books; Revised edition (1996)

The Textbooks are available at: Paperback Exchange in Via delle Oche 4R, or Feltrinelli International Via Cavour 12.

The text books are mandatory for successful completion of the course.
In case the book is not available it can be ordered. Please let the bookshop assistant know that you are a FUA student and the name of the professor of this course.

FURTHER READINGS

(Books listed below are available in the FUA library)

FEUERSTEIN GEORG, *The yoga tradition: its history literature philosophy and practice*, Hohm Press; 3rd edition (2001)

ROGER WALSH *Essential Spirituality: Seven Central Practices to Awaken Heart and Mind*

GEORG FEUERSTEIN *The Path of Yoga: An Essential Guide to Its Principles and Practices* [Paperback]

SIVANDA YOGA VEDANTA CENTER *The Sivananda Companion to Yoga: A Complete Guide to the Physical Postures, Breathing Exercises, Diet, Relaxation, and Meditation Techniques of Yoga*

SIMON & SCHUSTER *The Sivananda Companion to Yoga*

MARK SINGLETON *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*

EKNATH EASWARAN *Bhagavad Gita*

SWAMI RAMA *Living with the Hymalaian masters*

LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE

The FUA library is located in Corso Tintori 21. Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times. 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 are also encouraged to take advantage of Florence's libraries and research centers:

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.bibliotecadelleoblate.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 and student (fee-based) membership information: www.britishinstitute.it/en

6. FIELD LEARNING

This course does not include field learning activities.

This course may include one or more local site visits. Please refer to the course website for additional details.

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 FUA academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

On the **second absence** the attendance and participation grade will be impacted. Please note that missing certain field learning activities may count for more than one absence.

On the **third absence** the instructor may lower the final grade by one letter grade. (Example: Final grade average of 93% or A will become a B).

The fourth absence constitutes automatic failure of the course. Students with excessive absences will be asked to withdraw with a W (if before the deadline) or leave the course with a WF.

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 always the student's responsibility to know how many absences he or she has in a course. 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.

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

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.
Objective	Understand the potential benefits of yoga; learn technique for proper breathing
Assignment	<i>The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali</i> , Introduction p. ix -xviii <i>Light on Yoga</i> , p. 19 – 53 Practice for a total of at least one hour at home the breathing techniques learned in class

Lesson 2

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.
Objective	Understand the principles of "Hatha Yoga" and be able to describe them; become familiar with tools available for practicing yoga; demonstrate active self-reflection
Assignment	<i>The Yoga Tradition (in FUA Library)</i> , 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

Lecture	Anatomy and physiology of Yoga. A balanced life style. Begin learning movements which soften the articulations and the glands.
Objective	Distinguish the physical benefits of yoga on the human body
Assignment	<i>The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali</i> , Chapter 1 Integration p. 1 - 19

Lesson 4

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.
Objective	Be able to describe the four paths of yoga, similarities and differences; Practice and gain confidence in basic sitting postures.
Assignment	<i>The Yoga Tradition (in FUA Library)</i> , 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

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.
Objective	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
Assignment	<i>Light on Yoga</i> , p. 205 – 233 (postures laying on back, specific postures to study in-depth will be indicated in class by instructor)

Lesson 6

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.
Objective	Be able to define Pranayama; Demonstrate how positive thinking correlates to an overall successful practice of yoga; Practice basic standing postures
Assignment	<i>Light on Yoga</i> , p. 61 – 74 (standing postures, specific postures to study in-depth will be indicated in class by instructor) <i>Light on Yoga</i> , p.431 – 448 (Pranayama)

Lesson 7

MIDTERM EXAM

Lesson 8

SEMESTER BREAK

Lesson 9

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

Lesson 10

Lecture	The Bhagavad Gita, inspiring ancient writing for the practitioner: excerpt revolving around yoga.
Objective	Evaluate and interpret views on yoga expressed in the Bhagavad Gita.
Assignment	Excerpts from Bhagavad Gita translated in English indicated in class by instructor and provided via course website or FUA library

Lesson 11

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.
Objective	Examine the way yoga has evolved in various parts of the world and discuss what “yoga” means today, locally and universally
Assignment	<i>The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali</i> , Chapter 3 The Extraordinary Powers p.45-60 AND Afterword: The Yoga-Sutra Today p. 75-96 The instructor will provide further readings on current yoga practices via the course website

Lesson 12

Lecture	Visit a yoga studio in Florence, practice and insight on the specific experience and lineage of the yoga instructor.
Objective	Analyze the real-world application of the art of yoga in a contemporary studio setting; Compare how yoga is taught in that particular studio to individual past or current experiences; Identify personal preference for setting and style in learning and practicing yoga
Assignment	<i>The Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali</i> , Chapter 4 Freedom 61- 73

Lesson 13

Lecture	The importance of recovery through Savasana. Different techniques to reach the necessary concentration to relax body and mind after the practice.
Objective	Recognize the importance of Savasana in the entirety of yoga; Learn techniques to relax mind and body
Assignment	<i>Light on Yoga</i> , p. 422-424 (Savasana)

Lesson 14

Lecture	Importance of sequencing. Bringing Asanas together with Pranayama exercises and meditation.
Objective	Consolidate all aspects of yoga in each individual’s experience so far; Answer student questions regarding continued practice of yoga beyond the classroom
Assignment	Preparation for the final exam.

Lesson 15

FINAL EXAM	
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