

PKIN 0400 0.00 TAI-CHI I – COURSE OUTLINE FALL / WINTER 2016 - 2017

INSTRUCTOR: Helen Wu, 342 Bethune College, Cell: 416-919-7652

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CLASS LOCATION: Studio 4, Tait McKenzie Building

CLASS TIMES: Fall: M/W; Section: A-9:30AM; B-10:30AM; C-11:30AM

Winter: M/W; Section: M-9:30AM; N-10:30AM; O-11:30AM; P-1:30PM

Summer I: M/W; Section: A-8:30AM; B-10:30AM; C-12:30PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course comprises practical and theoretical study of Chinese traditional Tai-Chi techniques with a therapeutic Chi-Kung healing meditation for health and well-being. Also included are Tai-Chi weapon two-person combat exercises of Tai-Chi Fan and Tai-Chi Sword for training students to have effective defence skills.

Tai-Chi is often referred to as 'meditation in motion'. Tai-Chi encourages the flow of energy throughout the body. Tai-Chi practice regulates and improves the functioning of the neuromuscular, circulatory, respiratory and digestive systems, metabolism and the endocrine system. Modern research supports the fact that regular practice moderates the effects of aging and boosts the immune system. So by the end of the PKIN Tai-Chi training, students will learn to how to reduce stress in their daily life; to improve body circulation; and to benefit their physical and mental well-being.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to assist students in transforming disciplined Tai-Chi training into internal strength; for it is necessary to begin with external training and then to reach inward. Students will be able to have a positive and enjoyable experience in the studio. They will also gain skills to maximize internal strength and to gain optimal health and deep satisfaction with life.

The specific objectives of the course are that students will be able to:

- Complete a therapeutic Chi-Kung routine (See text-page 54-90)
- Learn basic Tai-Chi techniques (See text-page 101-111)
- Practice the self-defence applications of Tai-Chi Fan (See text-page 228-233)
- Introduction of Tai-Chi Sword basics

TEXT / READINGS

Required text: *Helen Wu. Chi-Kung, Tai-Chi and Fan: A Step-by-Step Training Course*. Publisher: Helen Wu, Toronto, ON, 2005. Sold in-class; please see instructor.

Reading Sections: Text - Pages 22 - 114; 172 - 181; 228 - 233

OUTLINE

- History and philosophy of Chinese traditional Chi-Kung, Tai-Chi & Fan
- The essentials of Chi-Kung and Tai-Chi. Health benefits and healing.
- Training methods and avoiding injury
- Therapeutic Chi-Kung routine (See text-page 54-90)
- Basic Tai-Chi techniques (See text-page 101-114)
- Two-person Tai-Chi Fan applications (See text-page 228-233)

PRACTICAL SKILLS AND CLASS STRUCTURE

1. Warm-up:

Before learning Tai-Chi routines, it is extremely important to learn effective warm-up techniques. Tai-Chi can seem so effortless that some people imagine warming up is unnecessary. This is not the case. In fact, the legs require a lot of strength training, and all motions involve a certain amount of muscle tension. Here we will learn Therapeutic Chi-Kung as the warm-up for Tai-Chi Training.

a) Stretching: Stretching on the bar; stretches with stances; arm stretches and shoulder stretch.

Kicking: Front kicking; slap kicking and back kicking

b) Therapeutic Chi-Kung: (See text-page 36-90) The Chi-Kung exercises presented here were designed by Dr. Zi-Ping Wang, and systematized by Dr. Cheng-De Wu. It was published in 1958. The system is based on ancient Chi-Kung exercises, but also incorporates Dr. Zi-Ping Wang's decades of clinical experience. The therapeutic methods are time-proven: not only can their origins be traced back centuries, but the system in its modern form has benefited hundreds of thousands of practitioners all over the world in the more than four decades since it was introduced. No case of adverse effects has ever been reported.

The design of the series of 24 postures follows the human spine and the command system of the body – the nervous system – through the neck, then the back and through the limbs. These exercises can be used for relief of neck, shoulder and back pain, and for the rehabilitation of chronic illnesses such as arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson's and Parkinson's-related syndromes. Regular practice can also reduce stress and tension, and regulate normal bodily functions. Many shorter variation sets have been derived from these therapeutic Chi-Kung exercises, including cervical disk syndrome exercises, frozen shoulder exercises, and lumbar exercises.

2. Workout:

a) Tai-Chi foundational training: (See text-page 96-111)

Exercise 1: Body Posture: When practising Tai-Chi, keep the head, neck, and back straight. The whole spine has to be aligned properly to facilitate the rise of energy to the top of the head, and to avoid excessive pressure on the lower back and the knees. The body should be relaxed and the head held up, as though suspended on a string. It is important to keep the shoulders relaxed and to drop the elbows. Bending, stretching, and the opening and closing of joints should feel natural and unstrained. Generally, the eyes will follow the hands.

Exercise 2: Breathing Techniques: Breathe naturally and evenly, but don't force deep breathing. When the abdomen is relaxed, chi will flow naturally to the dan-tien, where it can be activated.

Exercise 3: Hand Forms: Fist, palm and hook hand.

Exercise 4: Stances: Opening stance; Bow stance; Horse stance; Semi-horse stance; Empty stance; Falling down stance; Crossed-knee stance; One-leg-standing stance; T-step

Exercise 5: Foot and Leg Techniques: Most steps begin by placing the heel on the ground, and then bringing down the rest of the foot. The hip joint should be relaxed and open. Pay attention to the direction of the feet and carefully observe the shifting of weight between empty and full placements of the feet.

b) Four of the most important Tai-Chi techniques:

The one of the great achievements in the development of Tai-Chi Chuan was the harmonizing of combat training methods with Taoist principles. The resulting form enhanced the flow of vital energies through the body, and represented an efficient and powerful set of fighting techniques based upon flexibility and supreme mind/body coordination and control. Today, Chen, Yang, Wu, Wu, and Sun styles of Tai-Chi Chuan all contain the most important Tai-Chi techniques (Ward off, Roll back, Squeeze and Push) in their training routines. Each technique has its own unique flavour.

Exercise: Ward Off - Roll Back - Squeeze - Push and Press (See text-page 107-111)

c) Two-person Tai-Chi fan applications (See text-page 176-181; 228-233)

In the 1960s, a Chinese martial artist, Professor Ju-Rong Wang essentially fashioned an entire system for training with the fan. The fan forms provide internal and external training for all ages and levels of practitioners. In Professor Wang's own words, "The shape of the fan is like a rainbow bridge. I hope to meld the Chinese culture, traditional Kung Fu, and Taiji into one. By combining the old I came up with the new, and hope to foster it for the benefit of the entire human race." These forms are designed to enhance internal energy and optimize health, but they include powerful self-defence applications as well. Note that many of the techniques can be applied to any similar-sized object, and are thus ideal for self-defence in a modern urban context. Here are the most important Tai-Chi Fan applications:

Exercise 1: Intercepting Upward and Downward

Exercise 2: Thrusting and Intercepting

Exercise 3: Chopping and Blocking Upward

Exercise 4: Thrusting and Blocking Forward

3. Cool-down:

Before finishing class, students will learn relaxation techniques (Chinese traditional self-acupressure). You will learn to relax the whole body, and then end the class with a discussion period and conclusion.

EVALUATION

1. Elements of Final Grade

Theory Exam 20%

Exam Date _____

At the end of the session, there will be an exam comprising multi-choice answers and open book questions about Tai-Chi, Chi-Kung & Fan.

Practical Skills 65%

Exam Date _____

Your final assessment will be conducted in small groups. Your Tai-Chi performance will be judged on the basis of: Posture & Technique 35%; Breathing & Pace 20%; Knowledge of the Routines 10%

Attendance 15%

Four absences will be allowed in this term. But 3% will be deducted from the “Attendance” component of your final grade for each class missed.

2. Percent:

A: Exceptional & Excellent (80 - 100%); B: Very Good & Good (70 - 79%)

C: Competent & Passing (60 - 69%); F: Failing (Below 60%)

PASS / FAIL OPTION

For students who wish to take a PKIN on a Pass/Fail basis; they must adhere to the timelines.

PIKN PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT

To receive credit for a practicum course a student must attend and actively participate in a minimum of 80 percent of classes for the course. When full participation is not possible, accommodation agreements may be reached with the student (complete classes missed in the next term, individual testing etc). The following absences are allowed:

24hour course, 2 hours week/12 weeks, students allowed 4 absences

24hour course, 4 hours week/6 weeks, students allowed 2 absences (S1 & S2 Term)

16hour course, 3 hours week/8 weeks, student is allowed 3 absences

12hour course, 2 hours week/once per week/ 12 weeks, student allowed 2 absences

P Terms – 80% of hours

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Clothing should be comfortable and loose. Please wear exercise pants, not shorts or skirts. Shoes must have shoelaces.

Pay close attention to details. If you do not understand how to perform a movement or technique, ask the instructor for clarification before you attempt it. No gum. You could choke on it. If you feel pain, discomfort or distress, stop immediately.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you wish to speak to me, it is best to phone me at 416-919-7652 to make an appointment.

My office hours for this session will be: _____

Location: Studio 4 A/B, Tait McKenzie Building.